Commentary

Volume Fifty-Two, Number Six, December 1971

The Specter of Weimar

Theodore Draper

POLITICS & ACLU

Joseph W. Bishop, Jr.

Forster as Homosexual / Cynthia Ozick

Jews Under Communism / Paul Lendvai

The Saga of Great Men--A Story / E.M. Broner

Of Fish and People / Milton Himmelfarb

Jesus on Broadway / Jack Richardson

Liberty & the Liberals / Norman Podhoretz

BOOKS IN REVIEW: Roger Starr on Electric Power and Pollution

Anne Hollander, James R. Adams, Lucy S. Dawidowicz

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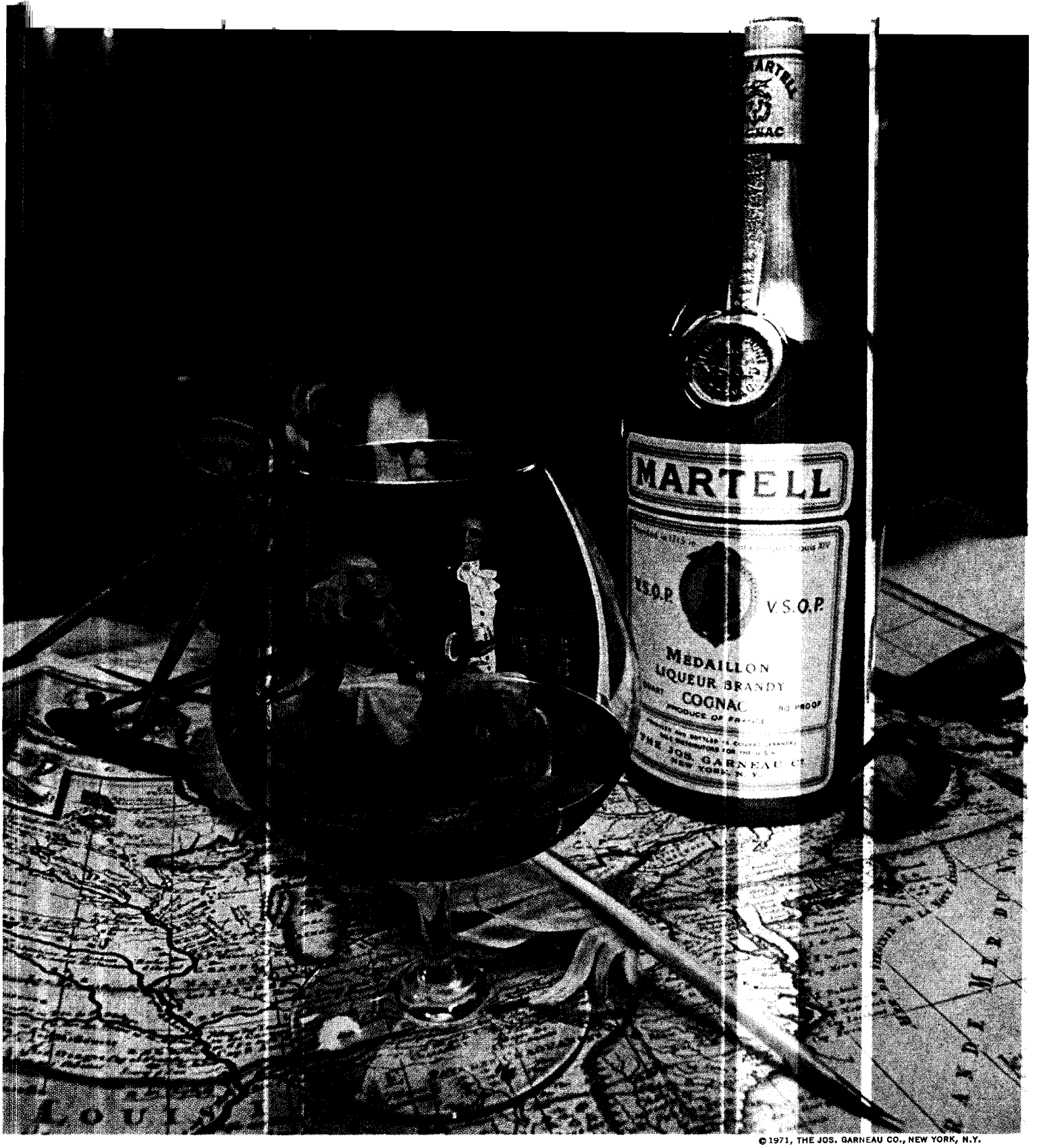

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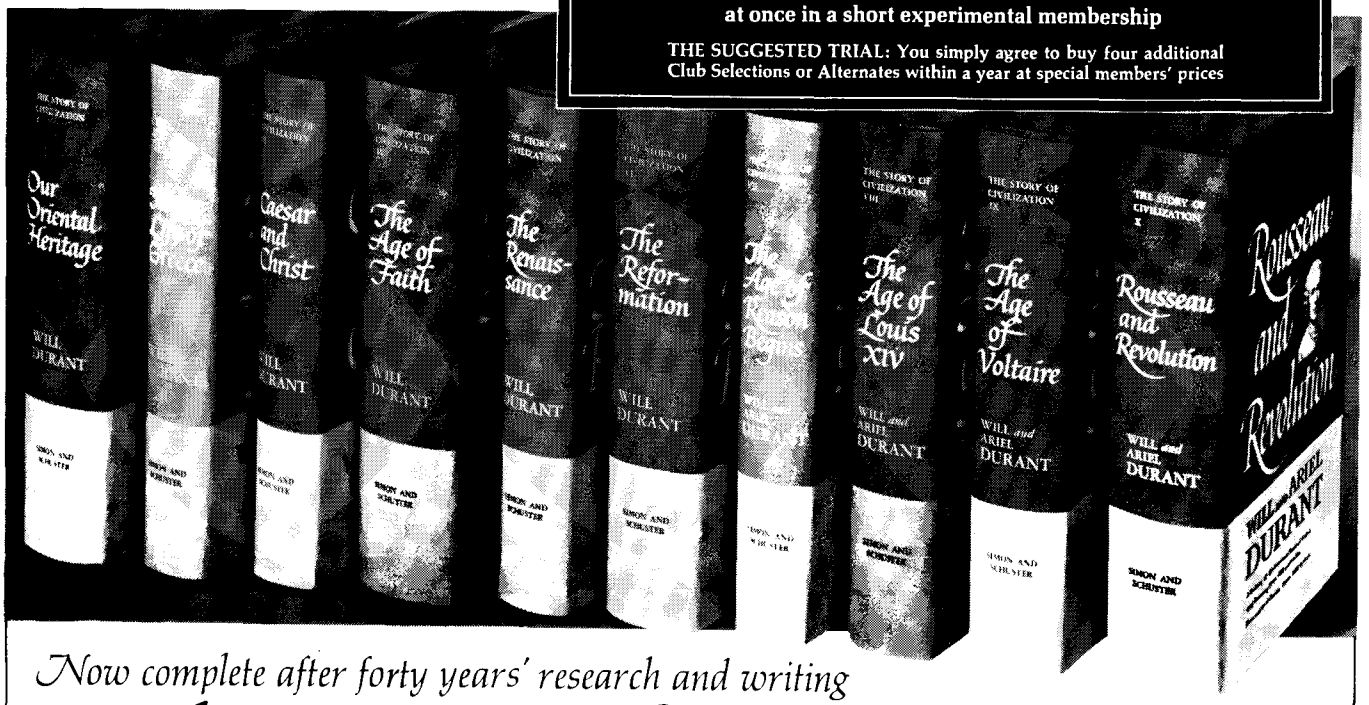

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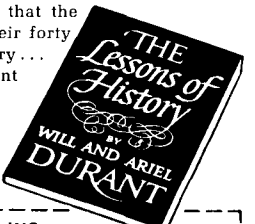

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Commentary

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Liberty & the Liberals

Norman Podhoretz

AT FIRST sight the change Joseph W. Bishop, Jr. (p. 50) tells us has been taking place in the American Civil Liberties Union looks like the same process of politicization which so many other organizations have undergone during the past few years. This, in fact, is how Mr. Bishop himself seems to see it. Although he never actually uses the word politicization, he does provide many salient examples of ACLU embroilment in "political crusades which may be moral, or even right, but which have no readily discernible connection" with civil liberties as such. I agree with Mr. Bishop's feeling that this is an undesirable course, but I think that something more precise may be involved here than is suggested by the general idea of politicization.

Mr. Bishop says that ACLU's base of support has in the past consisted of people "having very different political views, but sharing a common belief in the virtues of the Bill of Rights." How different, I wonder, can their political views really have been? Surely the common belief they shared in the virtues of the Bill of Rights made them all liberals—that is, people to whom individual liberty in its own right and for its own sake is an infinitely precious value. As Mr. Bishop needs no reminding, there are very few such people on the face of the earth, or for that matter in the United States, though here almost everyone pays lip service to liberty. If the tendencies he describes should go much further there will soon be very few such people left even in the American Civil Liberties Union itself.

ACLU once saw itself as a defender of the Bill of Rights against encroachment by the power of the state, and there are those within the organization who still talk as though this continues to be their main function. Yet ACLU might be hard-pressed to find enough work to do if it were to devote itself exclusively to the protection of civil liberties from government assault. Never has there been so much talk of repression, but never has there been so great a degree of civil freedom, probably in the history of the world, as exists in the United States today. Far from curtailing personal liberty, the government seems unable, even when it is willing, to set any significant limits on the freedom to speak, the freedom to publish, the freedom to vote, the freedom to associate, the freedom to worship; and the provisions governing both due process and equal protection of the law are more stringently enforced than ever before.

For it is important to recognize that even if the entire indictment brought against the government by those who speak of repression were true—even if there really were an official conspiracy directed from Washington to wipe out the Black Panther party; even if it could be shown that the killings at Kent State and Jackson State were deliberate acts of murder; even if the prosecutions of Dr. Spock and the Chicago Seven and the Berrigans really were unconstitutional or abuses of prosecutorial discretion; even if the police really were being encouraged to violate the rights of suspects; and even if the Vice President and the Justice Department really were attempting to muzzle the press—even if all this were

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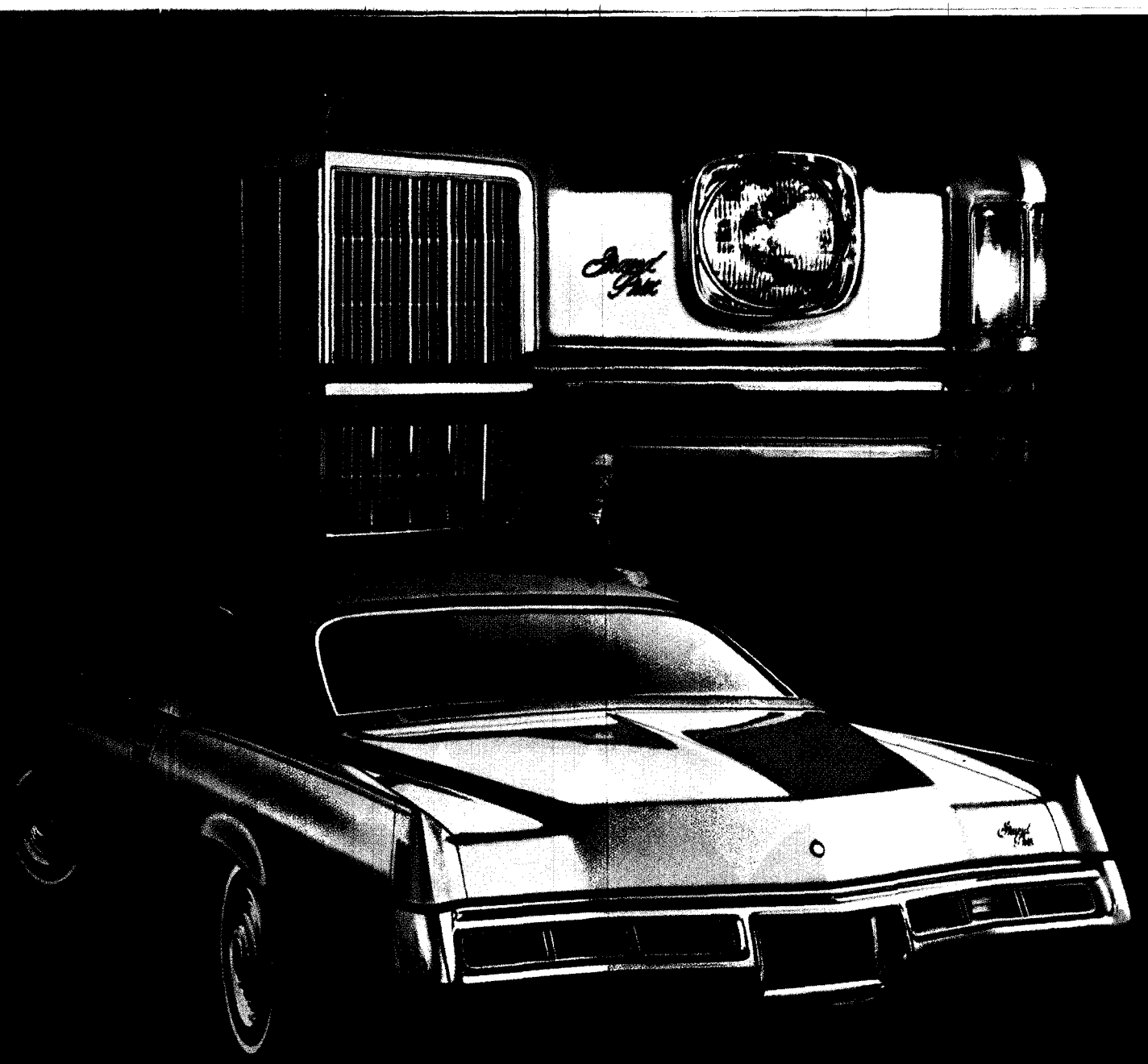

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true, and most of it is not,* it would also still be true that there is no censorship of any kind to speak of in the United States today and that the rights of dissenters have over and over again been either respected by the authorities or, when not respected by the authorities, then affirmed and vindicated in the courts.

Why then do so many prominent persons, among them a former Attorney General of the United States and the Legal Director of ACLU, persist in spreading the impression that our liberties are either illusory or in imminent peril of suspension? Why do they go on lending support to the kind of view expressed by ACLU's Legal Director when he said that "we are not yet a fascist state in general," and of which Theodore Draper (p. 43) gives many other examples? Does it perhaps all come from an excess of zeal in the defense of liberty? Perhaps it does. But I doubt that those who cry repression would wish to be justified in the same terms which Senator Goldwater once used to apologize for the John Birch Society. Let me offer another set of explanations.

Some of the talk we hear about repression is, I think, merely a matter of partisan politics: it is calculated to discredit the Nixon administration in the interests of the Democratic party. Some of it, however, is nonpartisan with respect to Republicans and Democrats, and is calculated to discredit not the Nixon administration but the American polity by denying that it possesses even the one political virtue which it unmistakably does possess. One might have supposed that it would be easy enough nowadays to discredit the United States by harping on the familiar litany of things that actually are wrong with the country, on its real social and cultural failures. But no: it must be said to be lacking in liberty too.

Well, whatever else we are lacking in, in all truth we do not lack for liberty in the United States. Liberty is not everything. Like everything else in the world, it is what it is and not something else. It is not, for example, equality. Nor is it "distributive justice." Nor is it community. Nor is it clean air. Freedom can and in this country does live—if not in perfect harmony, then on chilly terms—with the inequitable distribution of wealth, with racial and ethnic discrimination, with a shallowness of culture. The increase of freedom in America has brought with it . . . an increase of freedom. It has not brought with it a solution to any problems other than those specifically created by its absence (such as the problem of being forcibly prevented from speaking one's mind and penalized with imprisonment for doing so), and it has even created problems in the maintenance of social order which never existed before. It has not made us more equal or more peaceable; it has only made us freer.

For those of us who value freedom and need it, this is enough and, more than enough, it is a blessing; we ask of freedom only that it be itself and that it give us what it alone can give. There are, however, those for whom liberty, in being only itself, is of little or even of no account at all. What good is freedom, they say, when it does nothing to abolish poverty, war, racism, and pollution? The answer to this question does not lie in an apologetic listing of the contributions of freedom to these other worthy causes, although such a list could certainly be drawn up if one had a mind to draw it up; the answer lies in the assertion that what freedom is good for is being free.

Anyone to whom this seems insufficient—to whom being free is good for nothing or for nothing much—is implicitly acknowledging that freedom has no great friend in him. It has no great friend, for instance, in Mary McCarthy who has said derisively that "freedom in the United States . . . simply is the right to self-expression, as in the dance, psychodrama, be-ins, kinky sex, and baking ceramics" and that it "is no longer a political value." And it would seem that there are those occupying important positions in ACLU and its affiliates who themselves share in such an attitude. Thus a Vice Chairman of the NYCLU is quoted by Mr. Bishop as believing that "Hyde Park speeches or Tom Paine leaflets" —this is how he characterizes the crown of all the civil liberties—are less important than "social justice." Possibly from some points of view they are, though not, I would have thought, from the point of view of an organization devoted to the maintenance and advancement of civil liberties. It would in any case be easier to decide the issue of relative importance if this noted civil libertarian could tell us exactly what "social justice" is and how we might bring it to pass.

A FEW years ago, Richard H. Rovere gloomily observed that a disenchantment with individual liberty unprecedented in the American experience had overtaken both the young and some of their older follower-mentors. The main reason for the low esteem in which liberty had come to be held, Rovere thought, was the realization, connected of course with Vietnam but also with other issues, that "free speech and free thinking and free love are not particularly effective instruments of change." (Not that the form taken by this realization could always be respected: Dwight Macdonald's complaint against liberty was that even after two whole years of "writing, speaking, and demonstrating against the war" he "had not got through to our President.")

The situation has not noticeably improved in the years since Rovere wrote his essay. Even among people less given to frivolousness than Macdonald, it is hard to find evidence in recent days of any growth in the appreciation of liberty, and the evolution of ACLU is a step in the other direction. If, then, there is a danger to civil liberties, it arises at the moment not from the government but from the desertion of liberty by liberals, the erosion of their old belief in its value, the weakening of their devotion to its cause. At best, liberty has never had many friends, and if it loses even the liberals, who once defined themselves by their commitment to it, who will be there to protect it from its many enemies on the Right and on the Left? ■

* See Walter Goodman's "The Question of Repression" in the August 1970 COMMENTARY for a detailed analysis.

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Letters From Readers

The Unconscious

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Lionel Trilling's perceptive and elegant essay, "Authenticity and the Modern Unconscious" [September], made me wonder: has Mr. Trilling changed his mind? I think he has, for the representation in that essay of the tragedy of civilized life as inevitable, even ennobling, and the employment of Freudian theory in praise of suffering, together with the skillful depreciation of anti-civilizing modes of expression, suggest a shift of direction in Mr. Trilling's cultural criticism.

It was in 1955, I believe, that Lionel Trilling presented a paper to an audience of psychologists and psychiatrists, later printed under the title "Freud: Within and Beyond Culture," which had as its purpose to commend Freud for having created a theory of man which "is a resistance to and a modification of cultural omnipotence" because it allows for "the existence of the self apart from culture." In this early essay, biology is seen to offer man defense against the brutalizing force of civilization; in the essay in COMMENTARY, it is the civilizing will to self-overcoming that offers such hope as we have for a responsible life.

I wonder; might not this new perspective, this change in what Mr. Trilling thinks it needful to emphasize, be due to a certain disillusionment with the purpose to which a younger generation has put his words, with a generation that has without shame removed the self "beyond culture," prodded less eloquently and discriminatingly . . . (yet not so inconsistently with what Mr. Trilling has said as he would surely now desire) by Norman Brown, R. D. Laing, Timothy Leary, and the drugs that make protest against culture no longer just right but pleasurable? This question makes irresistible the thought that Mr. Trilling's two essays recapitulate the passage from youth to maturity given in the Freudian scheme: "Where id was, there shall ego be."

JAMES SLOAN ALLEN
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In the course of "Authenticity and the Modern Unconscious" Lionel Trilling makes some clinical observations in support of his argument. In these, I am afraid, he asserts as fact some questionable notions about historical developments in psychiatry which should not go unchallenged.

The idea that the conversion hysterias of the 19th century have given way as the dominant mode of neurotic suffering to the character pathology of today rests on shaky foundations at both ends. Although the *"grande hystérie"* spectaculars staged by the inmate performers of the Salpetrière for Charcot and his guests have been replaced by other forms of show business, there is considerable evidence that less Hollywoodish varieties of hysterical conversion have by no means disappeared. It is true that patients exhibiting such manifestations are no longer seen by psychoanalysts, but this does not mean that they no longer exist, only that they appear in other settings, far from the psychoanalytic couch. As for the prevalence of character deformations in present-day psychoanalytic practices, this is certainly true, but rather than necessarily representing a cultural change in neurotic styles, it may simply attest to the extraordinarily broadened range of indications for psychoanalytic and psychotherapeutic intervention which has occurred in recent decades. Varieties of neurosis probably have changed less than the readiness to label as candidates for psychotherapy forms of personal discomfort and maladaptive behavior which previously would not have been thought to be outside the spectrum of ordinary and "normal" experience.

I do not believe that Mr. Trilling can document his assertion that mental illness is increasing in frequency and severity in our epoch. In fact the opposite appears to be true. Extreme and bizarre types of schizophrenia have become so uncommon in mental hospitals that it is now difficult to find typical catatonic or hebephrenic patients to demonstrate to students. . . . The populations of mental hospitals, particularly the huge ones, are decreas-

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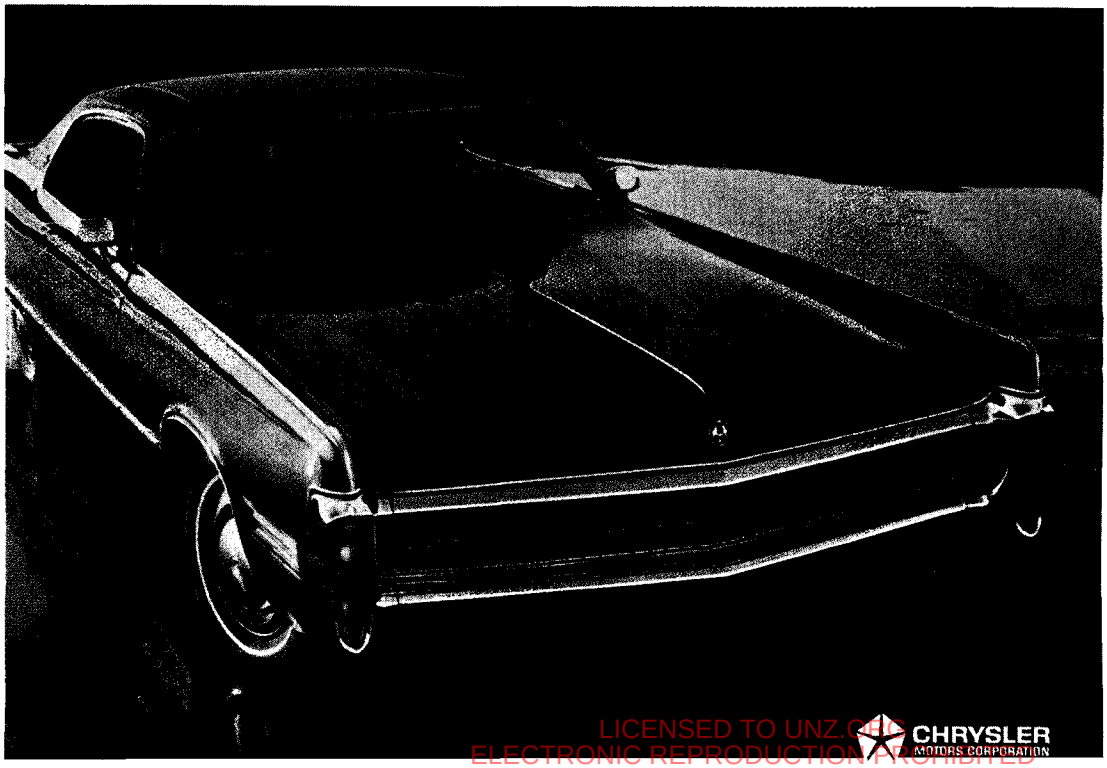

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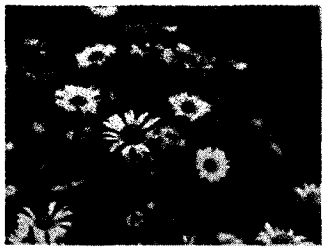

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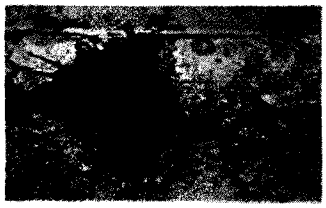

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ing, not increasing. The one per cent figure for the incidence of schizophrenia, far from indicating that this illness has become epidemic, seems to be independent either of differing cultural or possibly even historical conditions, and has, in fact, been used as an argument in favor of a relatively unvarying genetic factor in schizophrenia.

But these criticisms do not detract substantially from Mr. Trilling's closely-reasoned analysis. I would like particularly to applaud the manner in which he has exposed the cant behind the current revival of the actually anti-humanistic cult of the noble schizophrenic.

PAUL CHODOFF, M.D.
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is somewhat strange that Lionel Trilling . . . failed to make any reference to Wilhelm Reich's work. The more so in that Mr. Trilling repeatedly uses terms like "character structure" and "genital sexuality" which Reich took out of the realm of speculative abstractions and to which he gave definite biophysical content.

Perhaps, though, it is not so strange. One of the advantages of thus ignoring Reich is that it permits Mr. Trilling to claim that "genital sexuality [implies] a considerable degree of constraint and renunciation" because its development "is an arduous process which fulfills itself only through the renunciation of earlier modes of sexual gratification," without subjecting him to the effort of substantiating this view against the Reichian view of genital sexuality.

What we actually have in this quotation is a repetition of the mechanism of one of Freud's most widely recognized errors: his assumption that the psychic morphology he encountered in his patients represented universal human nature. Mr. Trilling, in other words, overlooks the possibility that the development of genital sexuality can be a natural biological process like that, say, of anatomical growth or puberty. His statement rests on the assumption that the way it develops in our character-stunting authoritarian society is the way it was meant to be, or the only way it can be, and the consequent difficulties that beset it he then sees as existentially inevitable. . . .

Mr. Trilling's refusal to acknowledge Wilhelm Reich in a discussion to which his work is so germane is doubly unfortunate. Not only does it lead him to make statements that tend to undermine the thrust of his essay toward the elucidation of an important problem of contemporary culture, but also by thus perpetuating what can, I think without exaggeration or paranoia, be called the conspiracy of silence so often practiced by intellectual journals, it contributes to the abandonment of the whole field of orgonomy to its present-day piecemeal incorporation into other systems (encounter group, sensitivity training, primal therapy, et al.) and to its distorted cooptation by the counter-culture.

JEROME GREENFIELD
State University College
New Paltz, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Lionel Trilling's "Authenticity and the Modern Unconscious" was a dazzling and, I think, largely effective critique of recent ideologies of authenticity.

But I remain a bit puzzled over Mr. Trilling's discussion of Sartre's rejection of the unconscious as presented by Freud. As I understand him, Sartre objects to the postulation of the unconscious on the grounds that an explanation of thought and behavior by unconscious forces denies individual freedom. It gives one a "way out" and thus provides an example of a life lived in "bad faith." For example, if I murder another man and then claim that I was compelled to the act by unconscious urges, I deny my choice in the matter and my freedom to have done otherwise. The unconscious becomes a literal "Other" who has control over me and I am no longer responsible. Thus I am living inauthentically.

In Mr. Trilling's view, Freud met this criticism earlier by placing a part of the ego in the realm of the id, or at least removing any hard and fast distinctions between the two realms. But rather than obviating Sartre's critique, it seems to me that such a modification of Freud's topographical analysis to-

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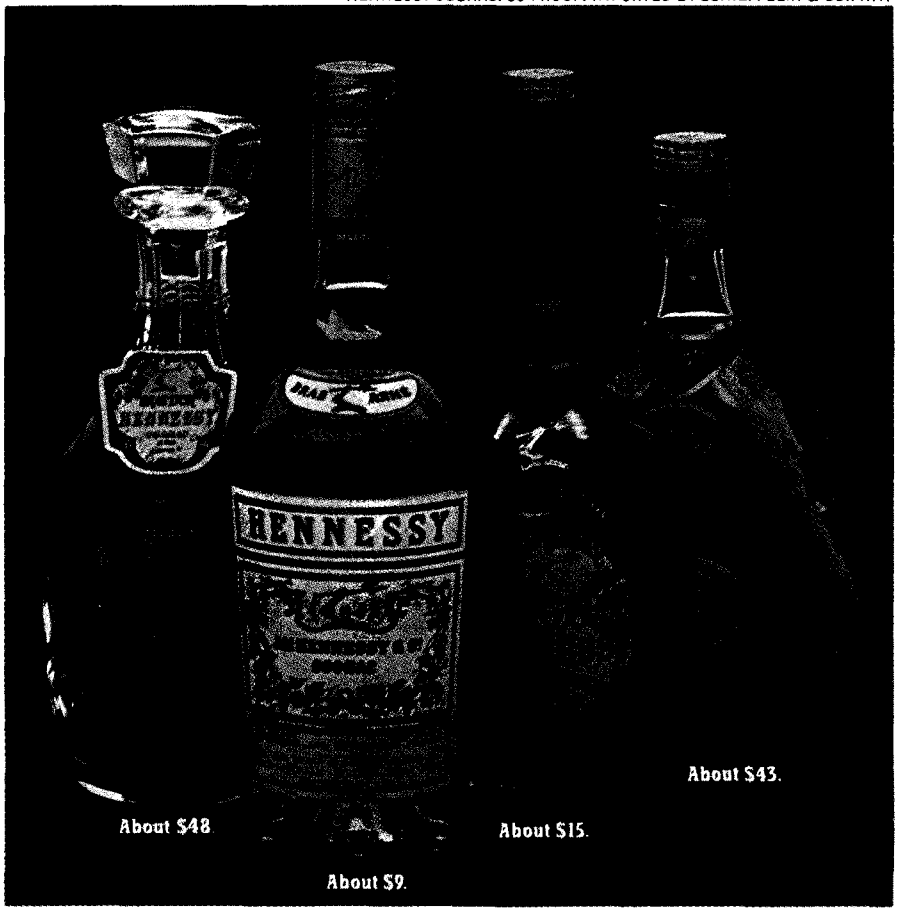

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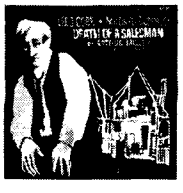

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ward more unconsciousness only serves to strengthen Sartre's claim that psychoanalysis allows the individual to escape responsibility and excuses him from making a choice. To be sure, this shift on Freud's part removes the "dichotomy between the ego and the id" and lessens the alienation of the "conscious self from its subversive libidinal impulses," but how this meets Sartre's fundamental objection, which is an ethical one, I do not understand.

RICHARD KING

Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The detailed examination of Freud's theories by philosophers of psychology during the past two decades should have made us wary of a too literal interpretation of Freud's topographical description of the mind in terms of the trinity, ego, id, and super-ego. . . . It may be harmless to construe the mind as a miniature commonwealth where officials give orders which are either executed or obeyed, and where idioms like "ruling, obeying, collaborating, and rebelling" play a role. But one drawback of the model (from which Sartre has extracted good mileage), is that obedience or compliance with orders issued by one part is itself a case of rational action, and entails that the unconscious or irrational part must itself possess a rational part, and so on *ad infinitum*. Hence the Sartrean conclusion that the duality of deceiver and deceived is (logically) impossible, and that "I cannot hide something from myself." One wonders why Sartre (and Lionel Trilling, who evidently follows him on this, since such dichotomy is the source of "inauthenticity"), should have expended so much critical energy over this point; Sartre on occasion does recognize the purely verbal character of the theory he is criticizing, his conclusions are ordinarily directed against conceptual incoherence (self-contradictoriness, etc.), and he acknowledges the distinction between theoretical or predictive knowledge and that knowledge of one's own behavior grounded on the firm decision or intention to pursue a course of action. It is not clear to me, however, that Mr. Trilling has acknowledged these distinctions, nor has he been able to escape the dangers inherent in an uncritical acceptance of a model where metaphors are often used merely to mark the site, as it were, where differing explanations of behavior, or of behavioral lapses, are required.

The "inauthenticity" of mental life, according to Mr. Trilling, is attributable to the dichotomy of ego and id; "the neurosis is a Tartuffian deceit practiced by one part of the mind on another." Psychoanalysis, by "identifying the subversive devices of the unconscious," enables us through the self-knowledge obtained, "to tear the mask from its [the neurosis's] face." Nevertheless psychoanalytic self-knowledge is itself "inauthentic." For according to Sartre, the dichotomy of ego and id "permits" the former to "disown" the latter: the ego, thus "alienated from its subversive libidinal impulses," refuses to accept responsibility for events or happenings inside itself (inside the ego?) and inaccessible to its control. However, Freud's later revision of his theory, fully articulated for the first time in his *Civilization and Its Discontents*, "sets at naught" Sartre's criticism. For with his "discovery" of the super-ego, Freud recognized that "there is something in the ego itself which is also unconscious," an element which "seceded" from the ego, and which directs against itself "an unremitting and largely gratuitous harshness." Even moral judgment and self-criticism are under its sway, and can no longer be regarded as "wholly a function of consciousness." Mr. Trilling's pessimistic conclusion, which is ultimately directed against egalitarian hedonism and a social meliorism which regards society as a "sufficient cause of man's frustration," is that life is fundamentally irrational or "intractable to reasonable will," the human condition "immitigable." Acknowledgment of this "flagrant inauthenticity essential to the mental structure" is the only source of a new authenticity which alone can sustain human existence.

What are we to make of this two-part tale of political disownment and collaboration? Repudiation of the id is at first a source of inauthenticity, but the later acknowledgment of its pervasive influence is the source of authenticity; appeal to a causal analysis

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of one's own behavior is first an illegitimate excuse, then is sanctioned by theory. With respect to the latter claim, it could reasonably be maintained that the contrary is the case: it was Freud's genius to have discovered the presence of reasons and motives analogous to those operative in normal goal-directed behavior in behavior previously regarded as "accidental" or caused (although such reasons are not "rational" in the usual sense). Nor is it clear to me how Freud's views entail Mr. Trilling's near identification of the causes which lead a man to hold a set of beliefs, and the reasons which can be adduced in support of those beliefs. For moral criticism, too, according to Mr. Trilling, is "not wholly conscious." Apart from these general objections, however, the moral appraisals to which theory is subject, and which are embodied in the terms "authenticity" and "inauthenticity," are puzzling, for these terms appear to describe both theoretical error and rectitude, and the exercise of conscious choice by agents, selves, or their "parts." To be sure, a man may attempt to exculpate himself or his actions by claiming that he was compelled to do it, driven to it, or was unaware that he was doing it. In some cases this claim is a true one, in others an excuse. But on what grounds is theory responsible? If the alleged premises of the theory lead somehow to moral conclusions, we suspect it is because the idiom of political collaboration and control in terms of which the theory is couched already presupposes them.

None of this is necessarily to impugn Mr. Trilling's *conclusions*: we do what we know we ought not to do, and do not do what we know we ought (although this is not always attributable to self-deception, nor are we *always* remiss in our actions: the reign of causality is not absolute). And this gap between thought and action may prompt us to the pessimistic conclusions and tragic vision of Mr. Trilling. Confronted with the fact of moral weakness, it may be true that "psychoanalysis does not cure, it reconciles," as Phillip Rieff . . . has pointed out. But the appropriate conclusions are not to be drawn from a series of metaphors which only replicate a reality they are therefore powerless to explain.

ROBERT ROSTHAL
Department of Philosophy
University of North Carolina
Greensboro, North Carolina

Of Cities & Suits

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Isn't it possible that in his book, *Boss*, Mike Royko (in the illogical, unscrupulous way of satirists) used Richard Daley as a symbol, and Chicago itself as a *reductio ad absurdum* of a way of life? And couldn't Studs Terkel's shockingly sentimental statement, which Joseph Epstein cites in his review [Books in Review, September], be rephrased to read, "The money keeps flowing, the construction workers are always busy, but it's a wretched place for a human being to live in"? For decades now loyal American social scientists have been saying, "It's not a very pretty system, but it works," until finally the point of view is taken for granted. "It is generally conceded that Daley is the most effective big-city mayor," Mr. Epstein writes, though for some reason he also seems to be saying that Daley's crooks should be thrown out and new crooks installed. A very amusing theory. Unfortunately the system isn't working any more, though the garbage is still picked up regularly in most white areas of Chicago.

Mr. Epstein also resorts to the departmental theory of society; i.e., that such and such "isn't Daley's job." And so in this way . . . everyone is exonerated by virtue of the fact that it isn't his job to do anything about the problems that exist. . . . But no theorist of the "urbane-amusing" school, to which Mr. Epstein seems to belong, ever admits that to excuse individuals in this fashion is in effect to condemn the system. . . .

JOHN WILLIAMS
Seattle, Washington

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

For as long as I can remember I have suffered because of my race, creed, and national origin. In recent years attempts have been made to humiliate me because of my sex. But never, never before

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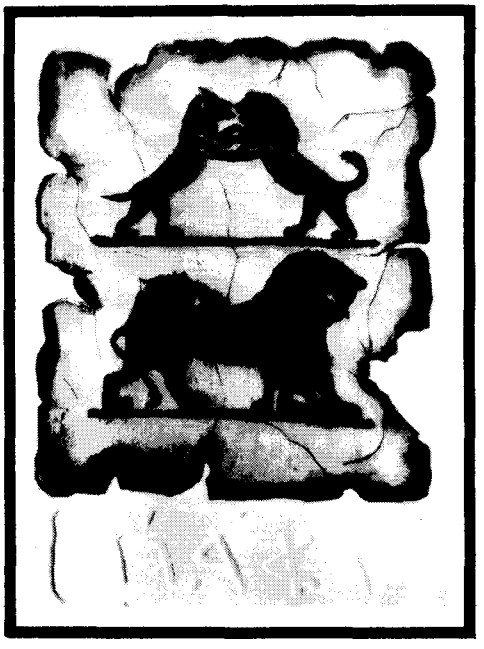

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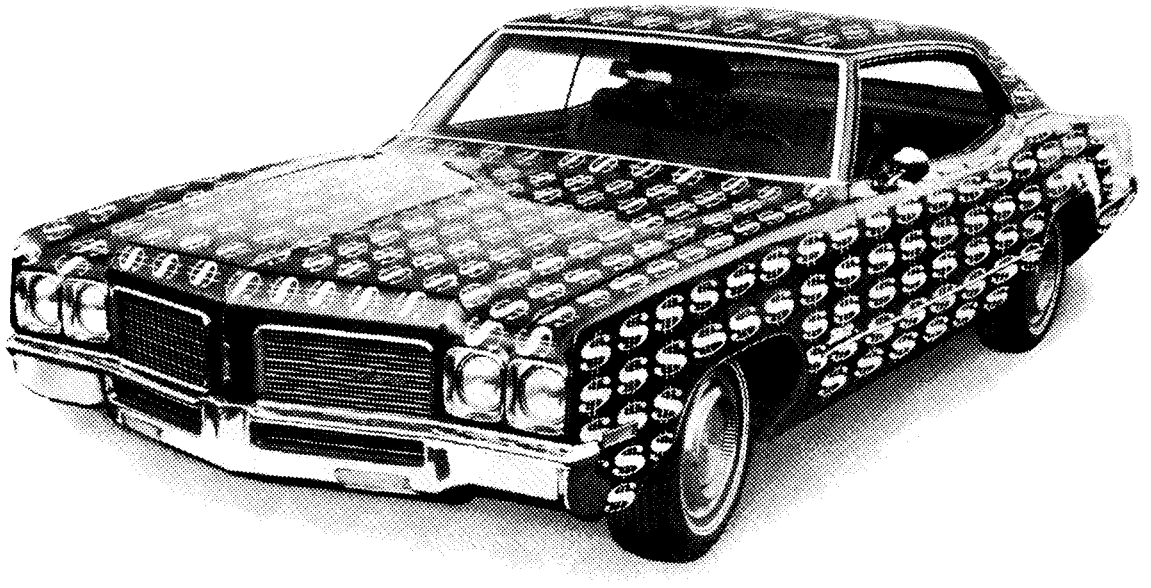

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was I the subject of ugly political innuendos (in print, yet!) simply because I happen to wear a size-46 suit (short and portly). Joseph Epstein is to be credited with inventing yet another variety of insidious bias. Thus he writes: "A political kibbitzer in Chicago once remarked to me on the occasion of a large fund-raising dinner that Daley had thrown for John F. Kennedy, 'Ah, you should have been there. Every size-46 suit in the city was in attendance.' "

Shame on Mr. Epstein and on COMMENTARY.

MAURICE FRIEDBERG
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana

JOSEPH EPSTEIN writes:

John Williams neglects to mention whether he has in fact read Mike Royko's book. On the basis of his letter, there is good reason to suspect that he has not. Allow me, then, to assure him that Mr. Royko has not used Richard Daley as a "symbol" and the City of Chicago as a *"reductio ad absurdum* of a way of life"; instead he has written about a particular man in a particular place. Nor is Mr. Royko's method that of the "illogical, unscrupulous way of satirists"; instead it is only the illogical, unscrupulous way of someone who has set out to do a simple hatchet job. But then if one believes, as Mr. Williams does (despite his attention, all the way from Seattle, to garbage pick-up in Chicago), that what he is pleased to call "the system" doesn't work any more, why bother reading books like Mr. Royko's or any other? If the system is dead, the case is really closed, isn't it?

Maurice Friedberg accuses me of *prejudice.* So be it. If he were a 46-regular, then I should be prepared to rethink my position. If he were a 46-long, then he would have my deepest and most sincere apology. But since he is in fact a 46-short (and portly), I will hold to my position.

The Gospel Jesus

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Arthur A. Cohen's review of *Jesus and Israel* by Jules Isaac [Books in Review, September] unwittingly reveals that like Isaac he, too, appears to have (and here I quote from Mr. Cohen), "discovered Judaism on the way back from Western Christian civilization: to have made the acquaintance of the Old Testament through the filter of the New." The remarkable thing about such Jews is that, having read and studied the Gospels, they can still think, to quote Mr. Cohen again, "that anti-Semitism, more precisely anti-Judaism, was a doctrine of contempt founded upon and elaborated from false and mendacious readings of the Gospels by historical Christian thought." To any objective reader of the Gospels, our only available record of the sayings and doings of Jesus, somewhat garbled to be sure but nevertheless still considered sacrosanct by the Churches, it takes no "false and mendacious reading" to find in them that " 'teaching of contempt,' as Isaac came to call the Christian-inspired anti-Semitism." Indeed, further on in his review Mr. Cohen tells us that Isaac interpreted "the eccentric St. John, the most anti-Jewish of the Gospel witnesses," thus admitting that anti-Semitism is inherent in the Gospels themselves, and is not merely the result of "false and mendacious readings". . . .

Mr. Cohen quotes with apparent approval Isaac's first proposition: "The Christian religion is the daughter of the Jewish religion. If only for this reason Judaism is deserving of respect." I consider this statement an insult to Judaism. . . .

Mr. Cohen also quotes with approval Isaac's second proposition: "Jesus, the Jesus of the Gospels, in his human lifetime was a Jew, a humble Jewish artisan." One can understand why Christians idealize the Gospel Jesus, even though to the objective reader he is often arrogant, vain, vindictive—anything but humble. But why should Jews ignore the evidence and misrepresent the tragic, self-deluded, obsessed, and sometimes quite irrational character of the Gospel Jesus? . . .

IRVING FINEMAN
Shaftsbury, Vermont

ARTHUR A. COHEN writes:

Irving Fineman has me dead to rights.

Unlike him, however, I do not take offense at the implicit anti-Judaism of the Gospel account of the life and activity of Jesus. To tilt with that particular historical windmill is a hopeless undertaking. Not that I am afraid of Christian anger. How can one be any longer at this juncture of history? The issue is larger. As I have ar-

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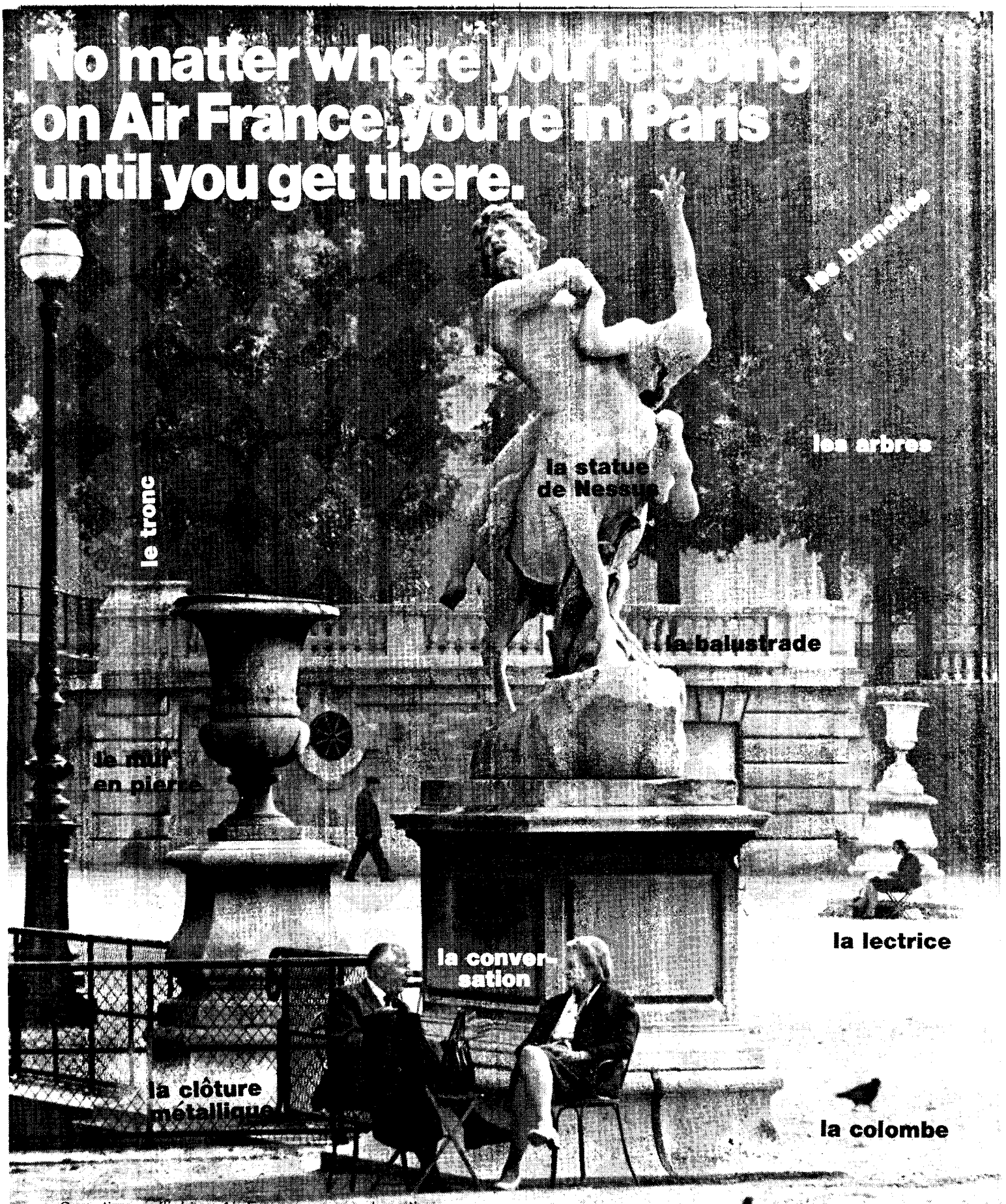

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gued in *The Myth of the Judeo-Christian Tradition*, there is an implacable theological enmity between Judaism and Christianity that derives from disagreement about essential first principles. Jesus conceived as the Christ is a Christian first principle from which I demur as passionately as does Mr. Fineman. Nonetheless, the anti-Judaism of the Gospels and the anti-Christianity of Jews should not therefore lead (as it has immemorially) to Christian massacre of Jews or to the neurasthenic paranoia of Jews toward Christians (the latter not unjustified in the context of the former).

Isaac was attempting however to discriminate between the theologizing of the Gospel account and its actual intent. Not for one moment does Isaac deny (if you would read him) that the Synoptics are very hostile to Jews and Judaism, but he does indicate that much of the propaganda of the Gospels against the Jews is probably later than the original narrative, written back into the text to underscore an anti-Jewish polemic well under way by the beginning of the 3rd century. Moreover (and this is the power of Isaac's argument), the insistence of the Church upon absolutizing the miscreancy of the Jew transformed the living history of enmity into theological categories that, like all habitual thinking, lead ultimately to misconstruction and brutalization.

In short, I acknowledge the force of Mr. Fineman's criticism but I continue to hold to the difference between history and theology, anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism (the legitimacy of the former and the execrableness of the latter), and, more importantly, continue to believe that if Jews and Christians begin to admit their real, substantive enmity, they can begin more useful discourse than that which is characterized by the frozen hostility of too many Christians and too many Jews like Irving Fineman.

The Light Touch

To the Editor of Commentary:

In these parlous times full of grim foreboding it is indeed an unexpected pleasure to find a piece of writing that makes one laugh uproariously. That Werner J. Dannhauser should have generated this mirth in a review of *The Obituary Book* by Alden Whitman [Books in Review, September] is all the more a tribute to Mr. Dannhauser's exquisitely light touch in an age of belching solemnities. A light and civilized piece of writing. Thank you, Mr. Dannhauser.

Andrew Sarris
New York City

Viewing "Little Murders"

To the Editor of Commentary:

I saw *Little Murders*, first in New York City the day after it opened, and more recently in Darien, Connecticut, along with some friends. . . .

The most interesting thing about the re-run for me, in addition to being able to understand the few mumbled lines of dialogue I had missed the first time around, was the strikingly different response of the suburban audience from the New York one: where the New York house had howled (e.g., at Lou Jacobi's atavistic courtroom soliloquy), the little theater with the imitation Greek portico was silent; and where the afternoon crowd at the Beekman had been hushed, as for example during the scene of Alfred's "reunion" with his parents, there was laughter in Connecticut.

The explanation for this reversal of reactions seems obvious: above all else, *Little Murders* is a "New York" film—a film not only made about New York, in New York, and by people who live there (Feiffer, Gould, Arkin), but a film which, I think, can only be appreciated by New Yorkers. William S. Pechter's review of the movie [Movies, "Jules and Jack," September] ignored both the significance and the symbolism of this point.

While labeling *Little Murders* a "belated . . . Procaccino-for-mayor commercial," Mr. Pechter seemed to be writing an anticipatory Lindsay-for-President spot in his attack on the all too plausible thesis of the film: that New York is going insane and nobody seems to be noticing. *Little Murders* is a story about the failure of the values cherished by the older generation to work in the modern urban environment, and nowhere is this failure more evident than in our largest city. Lou Jacobi's brilliant portrayal characterizes the anguish of the second-generation American ("When my parents came here from Russia they had nothing!") over the rejection

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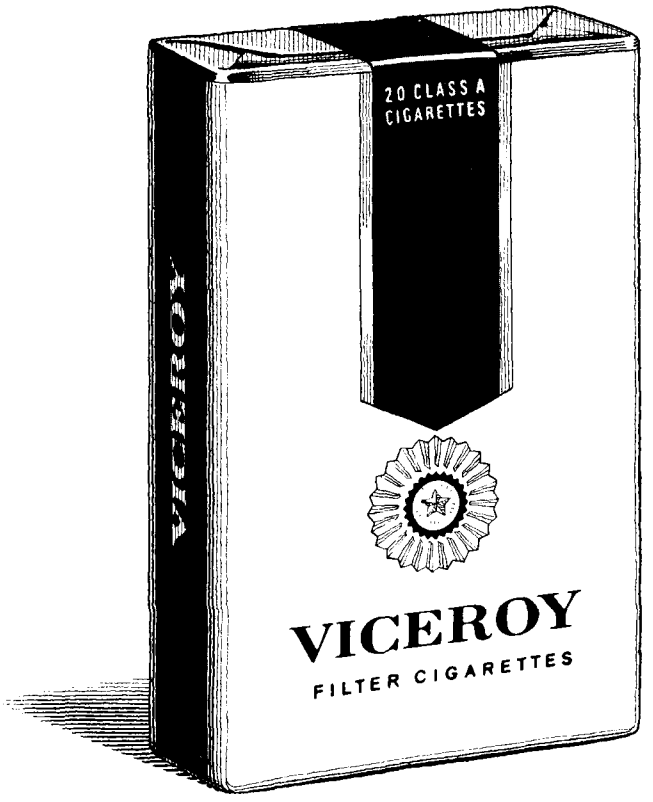

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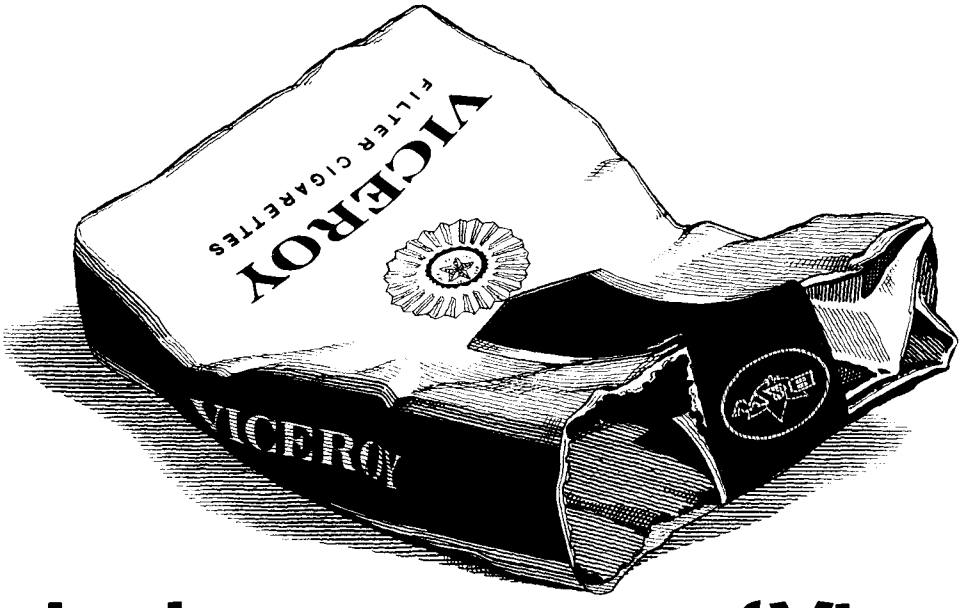

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of the "work ethic" by the young in the very city where on a clear day you can see Ellis Island. The painful scene of Alfred's visit to his parents' apartment—unconvincingly moved to Chicago—represents the intellectual impoverishment of a class, and an *idea*, born and bred on the West Side of Manhattan.

JOHN S. O'BRIEN
Rye, New York

The JDL

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his condemnation of the Jewish Defense League Milton Himmelfarb ["Never Again!," August] has overlooked one basic concept: namely, that turning the other cheek is a Christian concept, not a Jewish one. . . . One must also keep in mind that to turn the other cheek one must be sure that one's jaw will not be broken. . . .

The Jew has never had the assurance that his jaw will not be broken when his cheek is turned. The only times the Jew has survived have been the times that he has fought. To be sure, there have been periods in history when the Jew not only was left alone but was also permitted to rise as far as his talents would let him. But those times have been the exceptions, not the rule.

Mr. Himmelfarb is correct in opening his article with various quotations that one should not follow in the footsteps of one's father if one's father is wrong. Today's Jewish fathers who were young during the Hitler era must shoulder the blame for not alerting the free world to what was coming. . . .

In the attempt not to rock the boat, the American Jews let their brothers die. . . . The lines are now being drawn in the fight to free the Russian . . . Jews. There can be no fence-sitters this time.

Next Yom Kippur, instead of closing the service with "Next Year in Jerusalem," let us say "Never Again!"

STEPHEN H. KATZ
C. W. Post College
Greenvale, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Apparently Milton Himmelfarb is referring to the activities of the Jewish Defense League when he writes: "We say we will stop when the Soviet Union stops. Let it stop persecuting the Soviet Jews. Let it stop forbidding them

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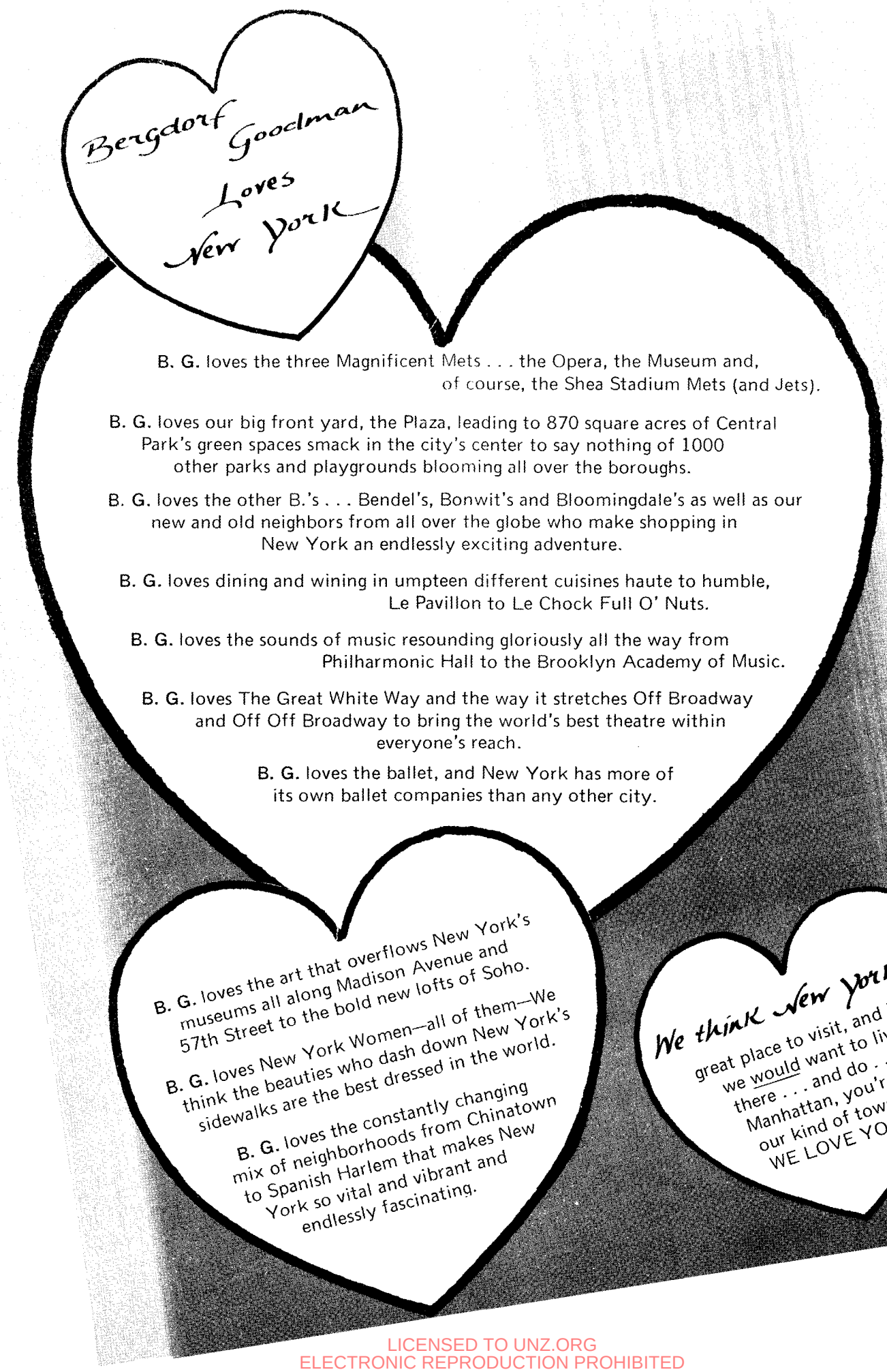
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B. G. loves the constantly changing mix of neighborhoods from Chinatown to Spanish Harlem that makes New York so vital and vibrant and endlessly fascinating.
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to do what they need and want to do in order to be Jews." It is disconcerting to find that Mr. Himmelfarb, who is generally judicious when he appraises the Establishment Jewish organizations, takes the antics of the JDL seriously. Bombing and vandalizing Russian property, releasing stinkbombs and mice at concerts of Russian artists, shouting obscenities at Russian diplomatic personnel and their wives on the street, can only harm the struggle of the Russian Jews to maintain their identity and will also dissipate the sympathy the outside world might have for their plight. It is regrettable, too, that the media give the JDL publicity out of proportion to its importance and thus provide a platform for Rabbi Kahane. . . . The JDL slogan, "Never Again!" . . . is an insult to the memory of the six million.

JOSEPH KUTAY
Bushkill, Pennsylvania

MILTON HIMMELFARB writes:

Mr. Katz: If the Jews are embattled, more than ever we need not only courage but also clear thinking—not slogan thinking.

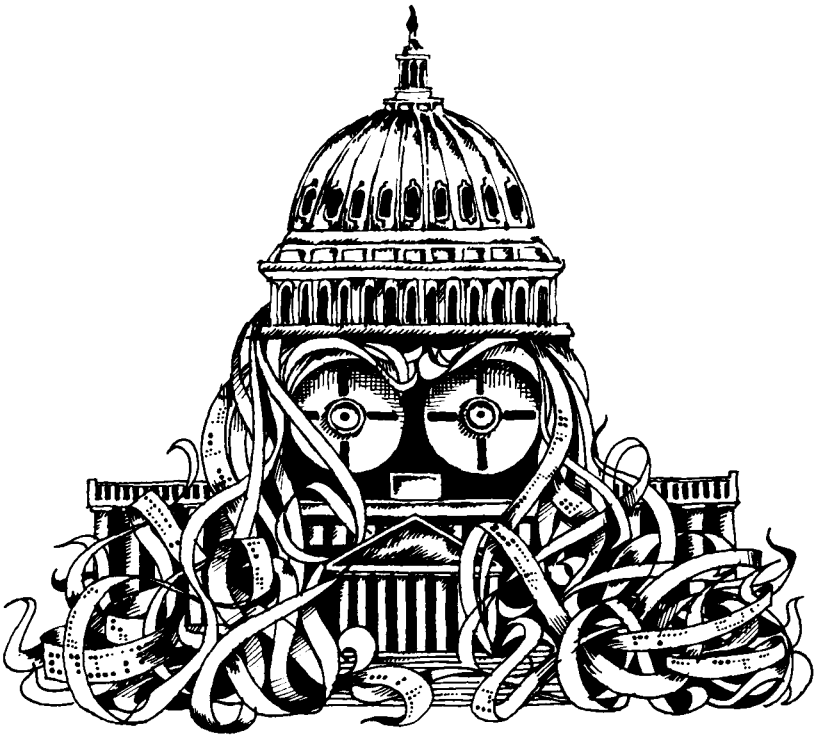
Mr. Kutay: Why do you think that by "we" I meant the JDL, when I meant the Jews? The things I said we would stop doing are set forth unambiguously—not stink bombs, obscenities, and the like, but demonstrating and picketing, in order to make the Russian government pay more for its anti-Jewish policies and deeds, in bad publicity, than it is willing to pay. As to TV, I suggested a reason why it misreports.

Social Policy

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I would like to comment on Nathan Glazer's proposal ["The Limits of Social Policy," September] that the incentive to work can be increased for the poor by attaching fringe benefits to low-income jobs.

This proposal, reasonable as it seems on first encounter, carries overtones of a "let-them-eat-cake" philosophy and conceals several important policy issues. Most important is the obvious fact that the best incentives to work are an attractive wage scale and opportunities for regular increments and continuously improved working conditions. Organized labor has



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Alan F. Westin, editor

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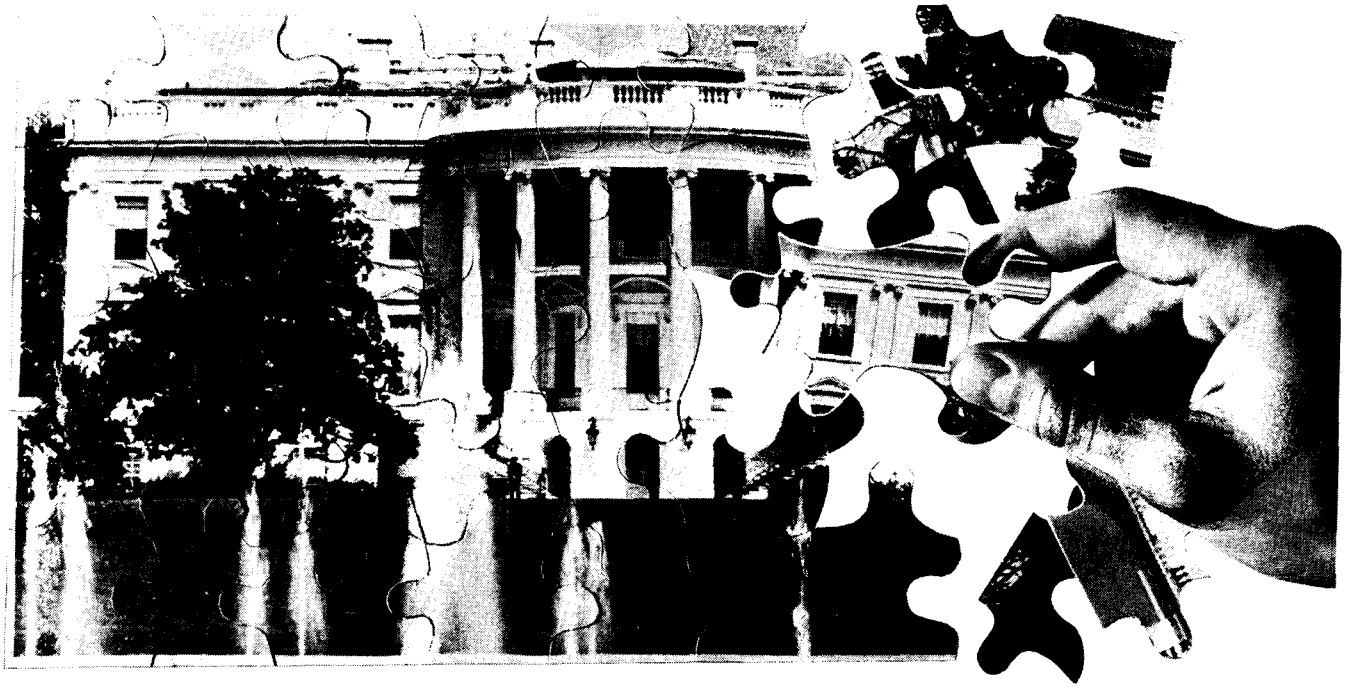

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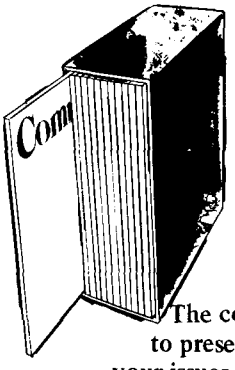

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hammered away for generations to achieve these essentials for the unionized job-holder. For Mr. Glazer, then, to imply that low-income jobs will remain unchanged, with fringe benefits as the sugar-coating to make the low wages more palatable, renders a serious disservice to the millions of working poor.

A second issue is that Social Security is hardly a fringe benefit now. All workers are compelled to pay the Social Security tax. This burden falls heavily on the working poor, making this tax a wage cut rather than a fringe benefit. If Social Security payments were paid by the employer or by the government over and above the wages paid, then the concept of "fringe benefit" might apply. The same can be said about health insurance. If the costs were borne by the employer and/or government, the working poor would be greatly aided. On the other hand, vacations with pay are truly a fringe benefit. I would concur with Mr. Glazer that the working poor, like all workers, have earned the right to a paid vacation.

Mr. Glazer failed to include other benefits which would make low-income jobs attractive, especially for mothers who want to enter and stay in the labor force, for example, child-care centers operated and underwritten by the employer and/or government and made available at a nominal cost to working mothers. Employers already offer low-cost cafeterias and discount purchases as fringe benefits; why not a high quality, subsidized child-care program?

VICTORIA OLDS

School of Social Science
Fordham University
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . There will always be some people on welfare, or in need of advice and counsel, because the circumstances of their lives overwhelm their ability to respond effectively. The cyclical nature of the problem, however, stems from the fact that man's need to exercise some control over his circumstances is nullified by repeated failure and atrophies if it is not used. A solution to the cyclical problem requires . . . an appreciation of man's fundamental need to exercise successful control over the circumstances of his life as well as his need . . . to set his own limits on his behavior and to accept some exterior limitations. This will require changes in institutional processes to restore more real control to the individual, commensurate with his capability, at the same time balancing his needs and ability to control them against his neighbor's. Some of these changes are already being made in education. . . .

MARILYN KRAMER

Wausau, Wisconsin

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The limits of social policy presumably are of less importance than its nature. Nathan Glazer identifies the first as the subject of his article but devotes most of his discussion to the second. No matter, he successfully beclouds both. The problems that confuse him are complex, but they are by no means as incomprehensible as he makes them appear.

Could such scholars as Boulding, Burns, Myrdal, Rein, and Titmuss be the ones whom Mr. Glazer purports to caricature when he depicts the "liberal view" and the "radical view"? This seems unlikely, both because of his apparent unfamiliarity with the field and because the distortion which makes caricature successful permits—even facilitates—recognition of the subject, but one could search endlessly in the works of the scholars named above without finding an approximation of either "view". . . .

Mr. Glazer's narrow understanding of the subject emerges initially in his assertion that "the heart of social policy is the relief of the condition of the poor." Few would dispute the importance of this concern as one element of social policy. . . . Within all complex societies social policy encompasses provision for the poor, but in all societies it also extends far beyond that—how far depending upon the particular society's traditions. . . .

One can trace one source of Mr. Glazer's myopia to his statement that he locates the traditional mechanisms for handling distress "primarily in the family, but also in the ethnic group, the neighborhood, and in such organizations as the church and the *landsmanschaft*." This leaves out entirely two major traditional social institutions for coping with distress: namely, government and the market. . . . To discuss the limits of social policy within a complex, urban-industrial, technologically sophisticated society without taking into account the roles of

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work and/or money income and outgo is to ignore the social context within which families function. This taxes credulity almost as much as Mr. Glazer's assertion that distress is increased by efforts to alleviate it. This proposition asserts a causality essential to the author's reasoning and to which he returns quickly: "It is illusory to see social policy only as making an *inroad* on the problem; . . . it also *expands* the problem, *changes* the problem, *generates* further problems" (Glazer's emphasis). One may grant that there are misdirected efforts that have this result—perhaps because they are incongruent with social policy. That the poor were to blame for their poverty was an important tenet in the Social Darwinist's view of society, and it is not unusual to encounter the idea today; from there it is but a short step to the author's position that those who express concern about the condition of the poor must share the responsibility for their plight. . . . Fortunately . . . by no means everyone believes that his flooded basement has caused the rain. . . .

Social policy, if it is to merit that designation, is very much more than a concern with distress and its relief. It concerns itself with the causes of distress in the breakdown of traditional relationships and the malfunctioning of social institutions. Beyond that, it addresses itself to . . . improving the quality of those relationships—the enhancement of opportunity and the redress of inequities. Its prime concern is with the functioning of social institutions. . . .

As it has developed in the United States—elsewhere, too, no doubt—social policy has its limitations. Under present circumstances its capabilities fall far short of our society's need. There are ideological barriers to central planning of any kind—and some measure of such planning is inherent in the very idea of a policy for society. Aside from this, planning for social change has been handicapped both by a lack of resources for obtaining and interpreting needed information about what is happening to traditional social institutions (social trends) and by the absence of sophisticated mechanisms by which economists have managed to circumvent obstacles to central policy formulation. Further, tradition has established jurisdictional prerogatives (of physi-

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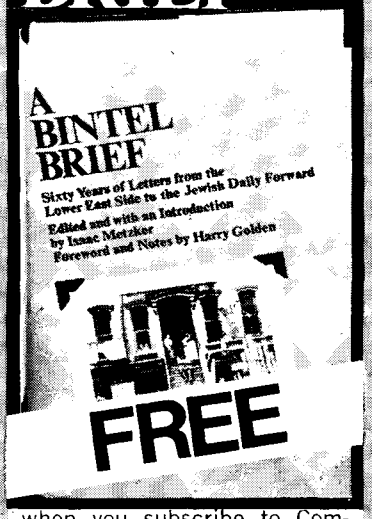
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cians for health services, of psychiatrists for mental illness, etc. . . .) that are formidable barriers to a comprehensive examination of social needs; the field of social policy has been additionally fragmented by the traditions that assign elements of responsibility to local and state government and to voluntary agencies. This complex fragmentation has inhibited the development of national consensus on many social policy issues.

But perhaps the most serious of all Mr. Glazer's misperceptions of social policy becomes apparent in his characterization of the revolutions of "rising expectations" and "equality" as forces threatening and undermining such traditions as still remain of the society he idealizes. . . . If one is terrorized by the inexorability of these "revolutions," he hardly can be expected to bring either equanimity or objectivity to the examination of social policy. . . .

VERL S. LEWIS
Baltimore, Maryland

NATHAN GLAZER writes.

I find it hard to reconcile the severity of the first half of Verl Lewis's letter with the argument in the second, which substitutes for my own reasons for the "limits of social policy" some formidable ones of the writer's own (lack of knowledge, governmental fragmentation, ideological resistance, etc.). The writer might consider whether these are only incidental obstacles or whether they do not rather suggest some deep and severe difficulties. And to help overcome the writer's resistance to accepting my own arguments as to what stands in the way of successful social policy, I suggest, to begin with, a reading of T. H. Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class.*

Philosopher's Argument

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Professor Herbert Heidelberger, of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, needs no defense from me or anybody else. But the treatment his letter received in the October issue [Letters from Readers]* may well have provoked in him that peculiar blend of irritation and boredom in which one simply says to oneself, "Drop it!" And it shouldn't simply be dropped.

Professor Heidelberger was obviously attempting to show that a certain argument purporting to prove that marijuana is dangerous is an invalid argument. His procedure was this: he set about to construct a second argument, of the same form as the original, whose premises are all true, and whose conclusion is false. A piece of "sophomoric sophistry," as Norman Podhoretz called it? Nonsense. This is an eminently respectable procedure for showing that an argument is invalid, in use by philosophers and non-philosophers alike at least since the time of Socrates.

What *can* Samuel McCracken be referring to by the expression, "Mr. Heidelberger's exercise in pure statistics"? Just what is it that he is calling a chestnut in writing, "Mr. Heidelberger's exercise in pure statistics is a chestnut going back at least to Mark Twain"? Professor Heidelberger's second argument? To my knowledge, it appears nowhere in the writings of Mark Twain, or anybody else. Professor Heidelberger's procedure for showing that the original argument was invalid? And are Aristotle's procedures for assessing validity in syllogistic arguments also chestnuts?—after all, they go back at least to Aristotle.

Moreover, so far as I can see, Professor Heidelberger's use of his procedure was entirely successful, even elegantly so. So far as I can see, his second argument does have true premises and a false conclusion, and is of the same form as the original argument; if I am right in thinking this, then the original argument really was invalid. If opposition to marijuana had to rest on such support as the original argument gives it, those of us who think marijuana dangerous, and who oppose legalizing it, as I do, would be in serious trouble.

COMMENTARY is often insulting, but it is not often both insulting and silly. Professor Heidelberger is owed an apology.

JUDITH JARVIS THOMSON
Department of Humanities
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts

SAMUEL MCCRACKEN writes:

I could claim that Professors

* Professor Heidelberger's letter commented on Norman Podhoretz's Issues column, "Seducer of the Innocent," and Samuel McCracken's article, "The Drugs of Habit & the Drugs of Belief," both of which appeared in June.--ED.

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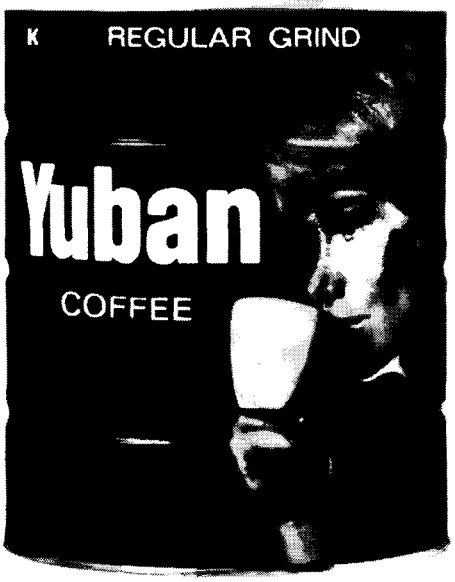

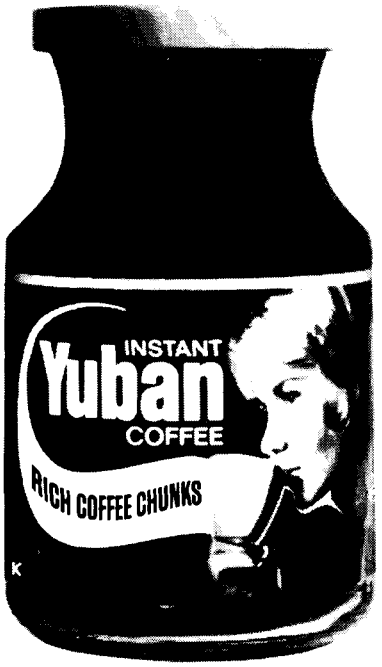

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Heidelberger and Thomson have fallen prey to the seductive force of von Manteuffel's Paradox, but that would be the coward's way out. Let me deal with the problem head-on.

There is, first, a certain amount of cognitive dissonance going on here. I responded to Professor Heidelberger's second argument as if it were an approximation of one advanced, I think by Mark Twain, to the effect that water must be intoxicating, since you get drunk whether you mix it with whiskey, brandy, gin, or rum. (If Professor Thomson has searched the Collected Works for this in vain, then she has the advantage of me; I at any rate recall hearing it ascribed to Twain.)

In either argument, the reasoner (whether Pseudo-Twain or Professor Heidelberger) uses true premises to argue to obviously false conclusions. The form of argument, Professor Thomson declares, must therefore be invalid, and I can do no other than agree. Why did I not react thus to Professor Heidelberger's letter? Because it did not then occur to me that this was all he was saying, and that he actually believed Norman Podhoretz to have made an argument so classically an example of the fallacy *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. Professor Heidelberger's imputation of such a blunder is, *pace* Professor Thomson, quite as insulting as any remark made in rejoinder to it. Now, as a matter of fact, Mr. Podhoretz did not say that marijuana use *causes* heroin use, but made the quite different statement that it *can lead* to heroin use. The two claims are distinguishable, and I do not see that either Professor Heidelberger or Thomson has made the distinction.

One difficulty with the water-leads-to-heroin formula is that it is not strictly analogous to marijuana-leads-to-heroin, for water (including in such mixtures as whiskey and milk) is consumed by all human beings, a fact not true of marijuana. If we are talking, and we are, about statistical correlation as a proof of causation, it will be the case with regard to water that whatsoever human behavior we may tentatively attempt to correlate with it, the correlation will emerge, inasmuch as the first correlative is universal human behavior. The presence, therefore, of constant conjunction is of no particular importance. Nor can there be any proper test of concomitant variation, for there is no way to remove the consumption-of-water factor to see if it is associated with a concomitant consumption of heroin. (That the deprival of water if extended long enough will be associated with suspended consumption of all else is of no interest either; death after extended inanition is likewise universal human behavior.)

It is quite otherwise with marijuana and heroin. Inasmuch as not all human beings use marijuana, its conjunction with heroin becomes an object for further analysis. At this point, the argument runs into difficulties for lack of statistics. Is it true that all those that have used heroin have used marijuana? If so, it becomes the case that in the most striking variation one can imagine, that of presence as opposed to absence, the absence of marijuana use is concomitant with the absence of heroin use. Among those who do use heroin, furthermore, two populations can be found, A and B. For the former, marijuana use is concomitant with heroin use, for the latter, not. There being no clear way of categorizing the naive into A and B, for any one person the decision to use marijuana may entail the decision to use heroin. No one, I think, would employ the fact that some drinkers, even a majority, *can* drink regularly without addiction as proof that alcohol is harmless for all those who *cannot*. We have been for some time accustomed to discerning two populations among drinkers, A and B, for each of whom the drug is functionally entirely different. None of this argument, to be sure, is meant to demonstrate conclusively that marijuana does lead to heroin use, merely to suggest the possibility that it can.

Finally: my characterization of Professor Heidelberger's argument as an exercise in "pure statistics" meant no more than that his argument ignored relations between the use of marijuana and heroin other than the purely temporal, such as the extent to which the former constitutes an induction into the drug culture, in both its social and assumptive natures. But to accept Professor Heidelberger's difficult reading of Mr. Podhoretz's argument would indeed force one to agree that his procedure is successful, even elegant. It may be doubted whether it is very illuminating.

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Jesus on Broadway

Jack Richardson

IT SEEMS that *Jesus Christ Superstar* is not destined to be a landmark in the struggle of Christian revivalism. Critics have found it overblown and conventional; religionists have called it crude and historically objectionable; and even *Time*, committed as it was to cover-story enthusiasm, nevertheless picked out traces of Spenglerian *Untergang* in the rock opera's religiosity. What many thought was going to be a fresh appropriation or youthful definition of the life of Jesus has turned out to be a stale piece of offensiveness that rekindles old animosities for no greater cause than that of a tawdry, show-business aesthetic.

This reaction will most likely in no way cause a serious reduction in the audience that has already committed itself to *Jesus Christ Superstar* in the amount of a one-million-dollar advance sale. As I overheard two ladies put it in a pre-overture dialogue, "They say you'll either love this or hate it." "Well, it's good that Jesus is at least controversial again."

Unfortunately, controversial is precisely what Jesus is not in this musical adaptation of his life. Except for a hint or two of carnality in his relationship with Mary Magdalene, what Tim Rice and Andrew Webber present us with is the same Jesus that popular imagination has always drawn from the Gospels. He is a troubled, tired, ascetic fellow, stubbornly pushing on toward his destiny at Calvary, religiously and ethically baffling to the mundane minds of his disciples. He is a worker of miracles, a harsh judge of the wicked, and a compassionate tolerator of human weaknesses. His vocabulary, of course, has been refurbished to accommodate the taste of those who believe that modern jargon is spiritually more meaningful than 17th-century English, especially when wedded to rock music; but his utterances on his way to the cross are crude facsimiles of those ascribed to him in the New Testament. Occasionally, he emits a falsetto scream, but that is attributable to the octave jumps in Andrew Webber's music and, to my mind at least, is in no way intended to mean that Jesus was an occasionally hysterical prophet.

No, what controversy there is in *Jesus Christ Superstar* has little to do with the opera's protagonist, and nothing at all to do with what one might call artistic innovation. It arises, instead, out of the conventionality of the conception, out of its dogged adherence to ideas and stereotypes that have produced a long history of dark social difficulties. A number of commentators on this production seemed mildly abashed that anyone could take such a simpleminded reenactment of Christ's Passion seriously enough to question its spiritual and historical assumptions. They may be right. But when a popular depiction of the life of Jesus turns up on Broadway decked out in lavish sets and raiments, it seems to me that the underlying interpretation of the Gospels is of no less interest for an understanding of the 20th-century Christian mind than the pronouncements of Vatican Councils and Ecumenical Conferences.

The problem, of course, lies in the way Caiaphas, Annas, and the members of the Jewish priesthood and Sanhedrin are depicted. Having for so long been delicately excised from Hollywood accounts of the Passion, they reappear in *Superstar* as a collection of grotesque villains, who seem, in each of their scenes, more like a coven of cackling witches than like the official

JACK RICHARDSON *is our regular theater critic.*

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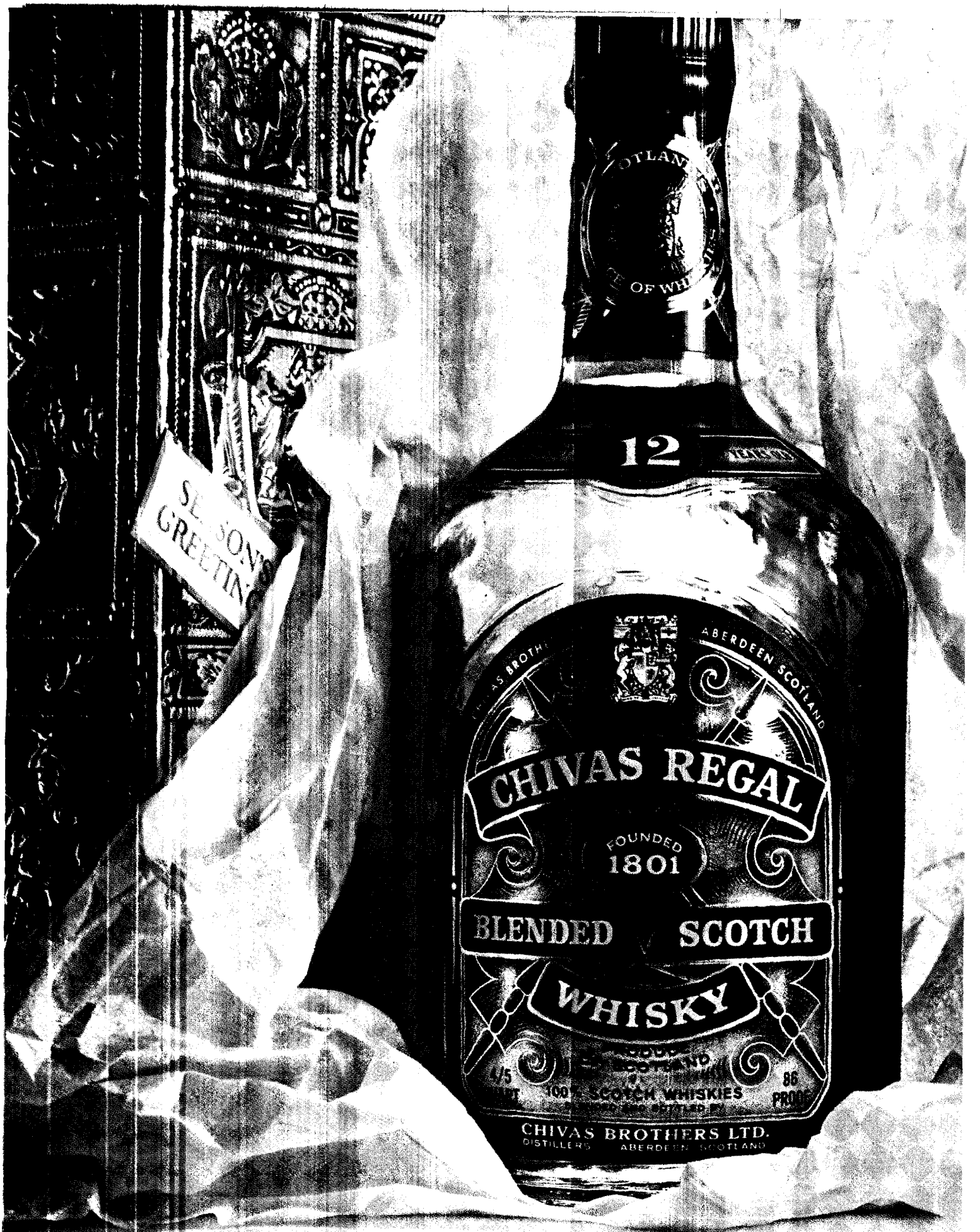

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leaders of the Jewish people. Indeed, the only attitude they hold in the opera that would absolve them of the charge of unmitigated and gratuitous evil is their fear that Jesus's preachings will bring down on them the wrath of Rome.

Now there is certainly no novelty in this attitude, and even its crude presentation in this opera is as nothing compared with, let us say, the Oberammergau Passion Play before the Daisenberger version was finally altered and its more rabid anti-Semitic parts deleted. Indeed, although there are scholars who have offered subtle interpretations as to why the Gospels tend to exculpate Pilate and indict the Jews in the question of Jesus's trial and execution—it has been observed, for instance, that Mark, the oldest Gospel, was written in Rome around the year 70, thereby making it politically expedient for Roman involvement in Christ's crucifixion to be deemphasized—it is, nevertheless, true that, given even the most lenient scriptural reading, the Gospels treat neither the Jewish priesthood nor the Jewish people kindly in their account of Jesus's betrayal, arrest, trial, and death. *Jesus Christ Superstar* may put the case crudely, but it is a case founded on authority. One may challenge the historical accuracy of that authority, but it is a barren enterprise to make it seem that the attitude of the Gospels is being abused by Messrs. Webber and Rice. The point of criticism, it seems to me, rests on the question of why a 20th-century artist would want to present a conventional distillation of these evangelical writings. Faith might be one answer, but it is an answer certainly not applicable to the creators of *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

However, I may be unjust. Although it is difficult to be certain from the lyrical scramble that serves as a libretto for this opera, the role of Judas does seem to have been fleshed out by a modern consciousness. In the versions of Mark and Matthew, Judas's decision to betray Christ follows immediately upon the episode in which Mary anoints Jesus; when the disciples complain of the waste of precious ointment that might be given to the poor, Jesus answers: "Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you: but me ye have not always." Apparently concluding from this that Judas believed his leader had forgotten his role as a social activist, the authors of *Superstar* have decided to make Judas something of a tormented revolutionary, a man who betrays Christ because he is preaching Heaven instead of Social Change. This evaluation, of course, ignores John's blunt testimony that Judas was a thief who cared nothing at all for the poor, but it does give Rice and Webber an opportunity to indulge in some modern exegesis. Considering the level of subtlety in this interpretation, it is perhaps best after all that, as far as their sensibilities allowed, they remained, in general, faithful to the four evangelists.

I HAVE stated that *Jesus Christ Superstar*, as a passion play, is conventional in its theme and crude in its variations. I think this is a fair estimate of the intelligence evinced by the opera. Its theatricality is another matter. Here things are slightly more successful. There is, for example, the opening scene in which human figures slither down from the top of a solid curtain that gradually decreases its angle of incline to form a stage. In a few seconds, one is presented with a tableau that creates a memorable image of mankind scuttling across the earth in desperate need of a savior. Then also, there is the lurid, comical scene in which Christ is confronted by a daubed, transvested Herod who sports a pair of cothurni in the shape of giant, metal wedgies and who engages in a vamping, mocking dance while trying to persuade Jesus to entertain him with a miracle or two. There is also the performance of Ben Vereen, who plays Judas as someone possessed by much subtler demons than the quartet of indeterminate furies director Tom O'Horgan has seen fit to surround him with on the stage.

However, in the end, O'Horgan, whose work I admired in the productions of *Tom Paine* and *Hair*, simply has found no way to connect his Flemish-hell imagery to the story he was supposed to present. All the moving panels, grotesque costumes, and imaginative and technical brilliance of Robin Wagner's sets cannot compensate for the lack of secular passion and theatrical coherence in *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Finally one feels that O'Horgan is treating his audience to one snappy production number after another, each succeeding one a slight escalation in stage virtuosity. By the evening's end, one is left wondering about nothing more significant than how O'Horgan is going to pull off the crucifixion scene, and whether it can possibly top the Expulsion-of-the-Money-Lenders-from-the-Temple number in the first act.

Another mistake on O'Horgan's part was his idea that there should be no pause between his scenes, that there should be a continuous evolution of action. This may have seemed the best way to present an uninterrupted flow of music, but it results in a sameness of tone that divests everything and everyone of nuance. Events and characters rush by, all held in the same mood, all frozen in the single dimension that theatricality produces when it is not sustained by any belief, logic, or textual purpose. An occasional solid break between scenes might have forced everyone concerned to realize that the incidents being depicted were not all of a piece, that they had originally been put together by narrators who knew that more is entailed in the varieties of life than a change of costume or scene. Finally O'Horgan is pathetically reduced to nothing more than gadgetry and meretricious costuming when he has Christ rising from a rent in the folds of a flapping sheet, meant I suppose to signify the veil of the temple, adorned in an endless gown that, rumor has it, cost twenty thousand dollars. It is a desperate final attempt to redeem vacuity with dazzlement, and while it does draw a few breathy approbations from the audience, they are of the sort I imagine one hears during the finale of the Easter Pageant at Radio City Music Hall.

As I'm sure everyone by this time knows, *Jesus Christ Superstar* made its debut in the world in the form of a record album. Calling itself a rock opera, it has been an unques-

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tioned success among those who are committed to, or diverted by, the pop musical culture, and indeed one can listen to Webber's score and find some amiable moments in it. But with all respect to the expanding, egalitarian cultural values of our times, I must confess that such music, when forced to enfold the complexities of something like the Passion, seems to me woefully uninspired and limited. It has neither the honest ebullience of the spiritual nor the dense power of traditional operatic voicings. There is something pat and carefully manufactured about it, qualities that can be accepted, and even enjoyed, in a single, well-produced song, but that become tiresome and wearing if one expects the cumulative strength of an opera and has to sit for hours waiting vainly for that expectation to be fulfilled.

Actually, *Superstar* is really more an oratorio than an opera—a notion that was reinforced when I saw the present production in which microphones are passed about at the cue for each participant's number—and it might make a better impression if presented, say, in a stadium by singers who did not have to pretend that they were enmeshed in a cohesive drama.

I REALIZE that, except for a patronizing reference to "breathy approbations" conjoined with popular Easter pageants, I have not really given an adequate idea of how the audience responds to *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Usually, I think that this should not concern a critic of firm mind, but since I am sure *Superstar* will prove ultimately to be of greater sociological than dramatic interest, I feel justified in mentioning the reaction of those who sat around me at the Mark Hellinger Theater. In a word, it was ecstatic. Everything, from Mary Magdalene's love song to Judas's hanging, was greeted with explosions of applause.

At the curtain calls, the actors received the veritable homage of those in the hall, and the theater was filled with emotions of transfiguration. What, I wonder, were these enthusiasts really experiencing? Did it have anything to do with the story they had been watching? Was it simply a frank delight in professional entertainment? Were they joyfully astonished to find that Christ still had a place in the world?

I am afraid I will have to believe that they had only been amused by the proceedings, and had especially enjoyed the fact that the amusements, as is fashionable nowadays, had a soupcon of audacity to them. In the end, I noticed that the actor who plays Judas drew the greater number of bravos and the most applause. Apparently, delighted as it was, the audience wished to draw back and keep a certain distance from the conclusions of the testament it had witnessed. It was applauding, most likely, what it took to be the new importance of a contemporary aesthetic style that seemed at last to have wrestled with a Significant Subject and bested it on its own terms. As a disinterested agnostic, I can honestly report that, if this is the case, the victory celebration was very premature.

The voices of Israel's doves

IN ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS, we encounter a former Israeli Major General stressing the preferability of a Palestinian West Bank to a Jordanian one, Minister of Defense Moshe Dayan explaining why he invited a Palestinian Nationalist to his home, a prominent Arab spokesman urging a hearing for the forgotten non-violent Palestinian, and other important statements of dove positions. An encouraging look at the process of mutual education which has been going on between Israelis and Palestinians, and which may hold the key to ultimate peace in the Middle East.

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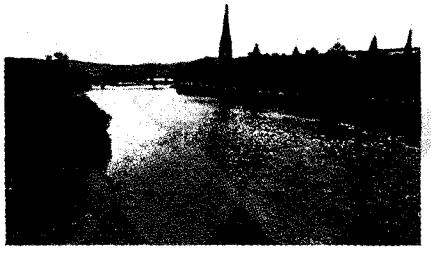

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The Specter of Weimar

Theodore Draper

WEIMAR GERMANY haunts democracies in trouble. The United States is in trouble today and, as a result, the question has arisen whether we are destined to suffer the fate of Weimar Germany. Those who profess to see such an analogy have rarely worked it out specifically and concretely. Yet the analogy is worth examining because it may lead us to a better understanding of what is—and is not—going on in the United States today.

If Weimar Germany merely stands for a democracy in trouble, however, it becomes too vague and general a symbol to do much good. Democracies may get into too many different kinds of trouble, and they may end up as too many different kinds of ex-democracies. Weimar Germany was a specific, concrete historical phenomenon, and it gave way to another specific, concrete historical phenomenon—National-Socialist fascism. Unless the analogy is pursued with some specificity and concreteness, it cannot be fruitful. And as soon as we try to be specific and concrete, the analogy gets into trouble.

It does not take too much searching to find a number of significant differences between Weimar Germany and the United States.

1) *Heritage*. Germany did not have a democratic past. American democracy is now 200 years old, the oldest in the world. Whatever the crisis of American democracy may be, and however flawed this democracy may have been in the past and is in the present, its roots are obviously much deeper than Weimar's roots were. The dominant military, economic, and even a portion of the intellectual forces in Germany never reconciled themselves to democracy at all. To the extent that a country must call on all of its reserves in a crisis of democracy, and the deepest layers of those reserves are embedded in custom and tradition, the United States is clearly in a different position from that of Weimar Germany.

2) *Economic*. The final agony of Weimar was brought on by a catastrophic economic crisis. Is the United States faced with a similar economic catastrophe? There are as yet no signs of an American breakdown of Weimarian dimensions. The American middle class is not economically desperate, and the American working class is getting a substantial portion of the economic pie. If there are any desperate economic segments in American society, they are not the same as those which brought down Weimar Germany.

Even if a depression in world trade, now that the international monetary system has broken down, cannot be ruled out, the conditions of Germany in the early 1930's and those of the United States in the early 1970's are still vastly different. Germany was plagued by war debts and reparations payments; it was virtually bankrupt financially by 1931. The adjustment of the dollar can hardly resemble the fall of the mark; the American economy belongs, so to speak, in a different order of magnitude from that of Weimar Germany.

3) *Youth*. Weimar had a rebellious youth, and the United States has a rebellious youth. This is especially true with respect to students. But there the analogy ends. In Weimar Germany, the Right wing of the youth movement was much stronger than the Left wing, as those terms were understood then. In 1930-31, the Nazi student organization won absolute majorities in the student associations of twelve German universities. In 1931, a National Socialist presided over the German student conference and, as one historian put it, this victory represented "the first 'seizure of power' within a German social group."[1] In the United States, the student movement has been overwhelmingly "Left," whatever that term means today. In Germany, the competition was how far to the Right the students could go; in the United States, it has been how far to the Left they can go.

4) *Fascism*. In Germany, there was an organized fascist movement ready and willing to take advantage of the opportunities brought about by the economic crisis. The Nazi vote increased spec-

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[1] Wolfgang Zorn, "Student Politics in the Weimar Republic," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (1970), p. 136.

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tacularly from 2.6 per cent in 1928 to 18.3 per cent in 1930. But the Nazi breakthrough of 1930 was made possible by almost a decade of organization and agitation.

Do we have a similar prospect in the United States today? If so, what is our analogue of the Nazi party? Is it the Wallace movement? That seems hardly the case, though we may have to wait a while longer to know the worst. In any event, we can scarcely consider the two movements very similar as they stand today.

5) *Hitler.* It is hard to imagine a Nazi victory without a Fuehrer. Whatever differences of opinion there may be on this score, few would wish to minimize Hitler's role or the importance of such a leader for any successful fascist movement.

Do we have an American Hitler at hand? If so, I am not able to recognize him. And if the answer is "No, we do not," the Weimar crisis is still farther away from the American crisis.

6) *Anti-Semitism.* In Germany, Hitler was able to tap a deep vein of anti-Semitism, extending from the upper-class nationalist Right to the lower middle class. In the United States today, Jews have been perturbed by the pro-Arab, anti-Israel propaganda on the Left.

The difference, whatever we may make of it, is marked. Some may wish to substitute blacks for Jews in the American crisis, but the analogy is a dubious one. The Jews in Weimar Germany enjoyed a relatively high status, and their persecution came as a shock to them. American blacks are struggling for a higher status, and they have been very much on the offensive to get it. I see little point in calling every form of oppression or persecution Weimarian; that term should be reserved for the specific and concrete form which oppression or persecution took in the Weimar period or which arose out of it.

I have mentioned these six differences briefly because I merely wish to point out the danger of loosely assimilating the Weimar crisis to the American crisis. In this respect, I agree with Professor Carl Schorske that "the fundamental differences between Weimar Germany and present-day America make analogizing a dubious game."[2] Weimar was not, after all, the first and only crisis of democracy; there were also the downfall of the Italian parliamentary system in the early 1920's and of the French Third Republic in 1940. A crisis of democracy is not in itself Weimarian; it may bear some resemblance to a number of such crises; and all these partial or fleeting resemblances probably fit into an indigenous culture with its own unique historical and social synthesis.

II

NEVERTHELESS, the analogy between the Weimar crisis and the American crisis is tempting. It has come up increasingly, and there has even been some public dispute about how suggestive the analogy is. Why, then, is it inviting? What warning does the Weimar experience seem to hold for the United States today?

Perhaps the most haunting similarity is military. The Weimar regime was born out of a shattering military defeat. It was blighted from the first by a "stab-in-the-back" legend. The defeat was never acknowledged by the anti-Weimarian forces in Germany, and its revenge became an obsession with them—first revenge internally, then externally.

The evident defeat of U.S. *aims* in Vietnam is certainly not the same as the defeat of German *arms* in the First World War. Our experience more nearly resembles that of France during the Algerian war. Still, the fact remains that the Vietnam war has badly shaken confidence in the American political and military leadership. A failure of this magnitude must be paid for. We have only begun to taste the bitter fruits of a bungled, shameful war. A war may be bungled without being shameful, and shameful without being bungled. Our leaders have contrived to achieve both, and the ultimate cost of this combination may be greater than anything we have yet endured.

Will we have something of a parallel phenomenon in the United States after the Vietnam war? The first signs of such a phenomenon have already appeared. We have been told by Admiral U. S. Grant Sharp, Pacific commander in charge of the bombing of Vietnam in 1965-68, that the United States should have been "willing to apply the force we had available," that we should have used our air power "to its full effectiveness."[3] This means, if it means anything, that we should have been willing to wipe out, if necessary, every man, woman, and child in North Vietnam, for that is what using our air power to its "full effectiveness" would have meant. We have as yet heard mainly from those who believe that the United States has used too much force in Vietnam; we may hear more and more from those who believe that the United States did not use enough force. If enough Admiral Sharps find enough gullible listeners, the country is sure to be in greater trouble in the future than it was in the worst phases of the Vietnam war.

The overtones here are uncomfortably Weimarian. At the moment, one cannot tell whether we will suffer a slight infection or the full fury of the Weimarian disease. Thus far we have received threatening omens and intimations, but we will be lucky if we get off so easily.

For the full Weimar treatment, one needs not only a lost war, a stab-in-the-back legend, a nation divided against itself between those who wish to

[2] Carl E. Schorske, "Weimar and the Intellectuals:II," the *New York Review of Books*, May 21, 1970, p. 20.

[3] U.S. Grant Sharp, "The Story Behind the Bombing," New York *Times*, August 6, 1971.

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learn from the war and those who wish to refight it, but also an economic depression on the order of Germany in 1930-33 and an existing fascist movement with a mesmeric leader to beguile the cynical, the desperate, and the despairing. The Weimar regime, after all, did not do so badly for a few years despite the early putsches and conspiracies. Strictly speaking, the Weimar crisis was located in the years 1930-33. If there had been no economic crash followed by the upsurge of the Nazi movement and its accession to power, we would not have had the particular, the peculiar, phenomenon of the Weimar crisis.

The Nazis were far more successful in winning over the unemployed, especially the unemployed youth, than in gaining the support of the employed workers. The number of registered, full-time unemployed in Germany increased from 1.3 million in the fall of 1929 to over 6 million in the evil winter of 1932-33 out of a labor force of about 32 million. Unemployment, it has been estimated, tormented one out of every two German families on the eve of the Nazi accession to power.[4] The unemployment rate in the United States in September 1971 was 6 per cent of the labor force, with the rate for teenagers going as high as 17.1 per cent. The unemployment rate in 1961 was also 6 per cent, without much thought given at that time that it might be a portent of Weimarian disorder. But the rise in unemployment in the United States has become increasingly worrisome, though it is nowhere as serious as it was in the last period of Weimar Germany. If there is anything to the analogy between Weimar Germany and the United States today, the two most important symptoms to watch may well be the post-Vietnam stab-in the-back legend and the growing unemployment.

The analogy, then, finally rests on the transition from a democratic to a fascist regime by way of a lost war and an economic disaster. Weimar has haunted the world, as the French Third Republic has not, because it gave birth to the monstrosity of the Third Reich. Is there anything analogous on the American scene today?

III

Some profess to see fascism already a fact of life in America, and others think that they can see it coming.

One radical Urban Affairs professor has attempted to give a preview of the coming American fascism. According to him, it must conform to a model based on the new conditions of "cybernetic technology, electronic mass media, nationwide urbanism, and a new structure of world power"—conditions which were lacking in Germany in the 1930's. In the new "techno-urban fascism" there would be no need for certain elements which were previously regarded as inescapable earmarks of old-fashioned fascism. The American model will be "pluralistic in nature" with "no charismatic dictator, no one-party rule, no mass fascist party, no glorification of the state, no dissolution of legislatures, no discontinuation of elections, no distrust of reason." Above all, it would be *"faceless*—without a single dictator or a single party." We should also expect this "post-industrial fascism" to be characterized by "guaranteed minimum subsistence programs, expanded social security, improved medical care, and enlarged housing and educational programs." In the international field, the new "ultra-imperialism" of a *Pax Americana* would seek full domination of the non-Soviet and non-Chinese world. It would at least be satisfied with something less than world domination.[5]

Whatever may be thought of this prognosis, it is surely not an American version of Hitler's Germany. If our "friendly fascism," as it is called, is *not* going to have a dictator, a single ruling party, a mass fascist party, glorification of the state, dissolution of legislatures, discontinuation of elections, and distrust of reason, it would seem to be only distantly related to the German model. After all, tyranny, repression, and militarism are not new. They have taken many different forms in recorded history. If fascism is to have any meaning, it should refer to a particular system of tyranny, repression, and militarism. If the American model is going to differ so much from the German model, it will be a different political phenomenon and should be given a different name. If fascism becomes an all-purpose term for repression, it will simply become another promiscuously used dirty word—and that is a sure way for a word to lose even its dirtiness.

What is most striking, however, about this American model of fascism is its uncanny resemblance to present-day America, which is presumably not yet fascist. Perhaps the author intended the horrible future to look like the present, only more so. In Germany, however unsatisfactory Weimar may have been, people knew that Hitlerism was different, and it did not take them long to yearn for the bad old days of Weimar as if it had been a lost paradise. Our friendly American fascism is evidently not going to be so different from our friendly American democracy.

Another radical sociology professor has evoked the specter of approaching American fascism. He assures us that "old-culture moderates or liberals will be given the choice, during the next decade or so, between participating in some way in the new culture and living under a fascist regime." This ultimatum is not restricted to moderates and liberals for, he says, "nothing could be more

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[4] Karl Dietrich Bracher, *The German Dictatorship* (Praeger, 1970), pp. 156, 169.

[5] Bertram M. Gross, "Friendly Fascism: A Model for America," *Social Policy*, November-December 1970, pp. 44-52.

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old-culture than a traditional Marxist." The new culture is, we are told, "the somewhat amorphous counter-culture that is growing up to challenge" the old. We are faced with the new culture or fascism because "the middle is dropping out of things." The old must surrender to the new "as gracefully as possible," soon and without fuss, or it must accept the awful consequences. I am not quite sure exactly what the next sentence means, but here it is: "If the old culture is not rejected then its adherents must be prepared to accept a bloodbath such as has not been seen in the United States since the Civil War, for genocidal weapons will be on one side and unarmed masses on the other."[6]

Just who is going to be responsible for this "bloodbath" and how it is going to be set off are not altogether clear. The general idea is, however, fairly intelligible. The "old culture" of the moderates, liberals, and traditional Marxists is going to be responsible for American fascism unless it embraces the new culture quickly and gracefully. Otherwise, the old culture will somehow be obliged to "accept" (not "stage"?) a bloodbath, presumably by military and police forces using genocidal weapons against the unarmed masses of the counter-culture.

One would imagine that, if fascism is again staring at us right here and now, the author of this apocalypse would tell us a little more about it. Instead, he saved his little intellectual bombshell for the very end of his book, a stratagem which rescued him from the responsibility of dealing with the problem more seriously. In any case, this is another example of a conception according to which the coming American fascism is somehow going to emerge from the "old culture," not from new subterranean sources of evil rising to the surface in times of economic breakdown and despair, as they did in Germany.

THE "new culture" is invariably related to the "youth culture." And the youth of every generation "are more likely to be right because they're in touch with the times."[7] Those who believe this notion should be required to confront the German experience. Were the discontented German youth, especially the German students, right in 1931-33? Are they right today when they have gone over, as Professor Ernst Nolte puts it, to an acceptance of "the Communist mythology of World War II and the post-war era"?[8] It may be argued that the rebellious American youth of today are not necessarily wrong because the German youth of yesterday were wrong. But can it be seriously maintained that there is something about youth in general "in every generation" which makes it the safest guide to what is right? If the German experience shows anything, it is that no idea or movement is right because youth or anyone else embraces it. This kind of thinking—or rather non-thinking—shifts the issue from what is right to who decides what is right; there is no difference in principle between letting youth decide what is right and letting the Communist party, the Catholic Church, or the Nixon administration decide what is right; there is no essential difference between "in touch with the times" and the late, unlamented "wave of the future."

A professor of economics has even determined the exact day that "fascism came to America." It was, he says, August 15, 1971, when President Nixon proclaimed the "wage-price freeze." According to this version, the Nixonian "leap into fascism" was brought about by the end of the "free price system." We are now living in a "horror" of "totalitarianism," the worst of which is that no one else seems to realize it. This economics professor also argues that the freeze is "a fraud and a hoax," that it won't work, that it only makes the old system operate at its worst. In this case, one wonders why a "freeze" that does not really freeze, or controls that cannot control, should have such far-reaching consequences. But the real giveaway is his cry of anguish that "nobody seems to care." If this act were even distantly related to the kind of fascism that came out of the Weimar regime, some people—probably a good many people—would care a great deal. If Mr. Nixon were really introducing post-Weimarian fascism, one test would be the *Gleichschaltung* of the New York *Times*, in which case this article attacking "our Caesar in the White House" would never have appeared.[9]

A California writer has felt the need to coin the term "parafascism" to describe the condition of this latest of lost paradises. He could not use the old word, "fascism," he says, because "there is clearly a difference of kind as well as of degree between Germany in the 1930's and 1940's and California in the 1960s' and 1970's." Here we again have the open recognition that the Weimarian and post-Weimarian experience in Germany cannot be meaningfully transferred to the United States, and yet we also have the insistent urge to make use of the fascist analogy in relation to the United States, if only in a somewhat altered semantic form. As for "parafascism," we are told that it is "less a disease of society than of the individual, less a case of public pathology than a case of private pathology." The seedbed

[6] Philip E. Slater, *The Pursuit of Loneliness* (Beacon Press, 1970), pp. 97, 147-48.

[7] Susan Sontag, *Vogue*, August 1971, p. 88.

[8] Ernst Nolte, *Freedom At Issue*, September-October 1971, p. 1.

[9] Murray N. Rothbard, "The President's Economic Betrayal," the New York *Times*, September 4, 1971.

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of this private parafascist disease is said to be "a life oriented to leisure," that is, the leisure of the affluent. By this time, we are so far away from the Weimarian pathology, which was decidedly public and social and which had its seedbed in a life oriented to a different kind of enforced "leisure"—unemployment—that there is hardly any point in pursuing the analogy, whatever one may think of this diagnosis of California's ills.[10]

None of these views needs to be taken too seriously. They are worth noting only because they represent a contemporary mode of fashionable thought which tries to establish some link between the United States today and fascism. For our purposes, the striking thing is that even those who push the analogy with fascism cannot bring themselves to go as far as an analogy with German fascism. Indeed, they start out by disclaiming any analogy with the fascism that came out of the Weimar regime. This usage raises the question whether they are not using fascism in such a different sense from its historical manifestations that they really mean something else by it. Just as any form of that good old word, "exploitation," has become synonymous with "colonialism," so almost any form of oppression and militarism is now being dubbed "fascism." I seriously doubt whether any clarity of thought has been gained by this verbal transubstantiation.

The trouble with drastically redefining the term "fascism" is that the redefinition may be more apparent than real, more in the writer's mind than in the reader's. We may be told that American fascism has nothing to do with the German concentration camps, the German dictator, a mass fascist party, and all the rest. But the word is shocking and frightening precisely because it is historically linked to concentration camps, dictators, and all they imply. In the abstract, the word can be made to mean almost anything terrible or tyrannical. In reality, its familiar past lurks in the background and cannot be so easily exorcised. If the historical expression of fascism did not persist surreptitiously, it would have little utility as a term of ultimate condemnation and rejection of American life today.

Americans are not the only ones capable of this kind of reasoning. André Gorz, an advanced French thinker, has discovered that "life in the modern factory or office differs but slightly from life in the army, in a prison, or from life under a fascist dictatorship."[11] M. Gorz may imagine that this tells us how hard life in the modern factory or office is; another interpretation might be that life in the army, a prison, or under a fascist dictatorship cannot be all that bad if it is no worse than life in a modern factory or office. Here, again, fascism is not conceived as anything different from the present; it is the present.

IV

THE idea that fascism is merely an extension of the status quo was also popular in Weimar Germany, especially in Communist circles. It was one of those aberrations which made resistance to fascism more difficult by pooh-poohing the changes that fascism would bring about.

Weimar Germany not only had a murderous cult of fascism on the extreme Right; it also had a suicidal theory of "social-fascism" on the extreme Left. This theory was first clearly formulated in 1924 in response to events in Germany —the German army's occupation of the states of Saxony and Thuringia, in which the Communists had entered coalition governments, and the collapse of the Communist uprising in Hamburg in October 1923. Its chief author was probably Gregory Zinoviev, then head of the Communist International, though the exact phrase was apparently first used by a German Communist, Heinz Neumann. During the reign of Zinoviev's successor, Nikolai Bukharin, the term "social-fascism" was held in abeyance; it did not become the linchpin of Communist policy until 1929, when Bukharin was removed and the full-fledged Stalinist period was inaugurated. From 1929 to some time in 1934, "social-fascism" became the most strident, divisive war-cry throughout the Communist world; it was applied most remorselessly and at greatest cost precisely in Germany.

In brief, the theory of social-fascism held that liberal democracy, and especially Social Democracy, was the main revolutionary enemy. In 1929, the Communists took the position that the "social-fascists," not the outright fascists, were going to usher in fascism in Germany. Later, social-fascism was charged with splitting the working class or with tolerating bourgeois regimes which paved the way for fascism, but the original version of the theory was far more extreme and revealing. In any event, the theory of social-fascism was based on the proposition that "bourgeois democracy" and "fascism" were merely different forms of the "dictatorship of the bourgeoisie." The only difference between them was that one form—bourgeois democracy—was "masked," the other—fascism—was "naked." The democratic form was said to be by far the more dangerous and detestable because it was supposedly harder to expose. The real enemy, then, was "democratic forms." The theory of social-fascism,

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[10] Kenneth Lamott, *Anti-California: Report from Our First Parafascist State* (Little, Brown, 1971), pp. 3, 54, 262.

[11] The quotation from Gorz rightly belongs to Professor Arnold Beichman (*Freedom At Issue*, July-August 1971, p. 4) who found it in *Upstart*, January 1971, p. 3 (published by the University Radical Union).

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as I have tried to show elsewhere in more detail,[12] was intrinsically designed to destroy the "democratic forms" of bourgeois society, not to hold back fascism as such. For this reason, the Communists still deluded and consoled themselves for over a year after Hitler had come to power with the thought that the fascists were doing them a favor.

THE theory of social-fascism was quietly interred by the Comintern in 1935, and one thought that it would never be resurrected. Lately, however, it has been showing disquieting signs of life in quite different circles and circumstances.

The prototype of the new version of the theory of social-fascism seems to be the idea of "repressive tolerance," put forward by Herbert Marcuse. In his well-known essay, Professor Marcuse also used the expression "totalitarian democracy" and distinguished between repressive and "liberating tolerance." The latter, he said, "would mean intolerance against movements from the Right, and toleration of movements from the Left." So "liberating tolerance" turns out to mean anti-Right *intolerance*. Instead of the kind of false tolerance which he considers to be "the tyranny of the majority," he called for the kind of tolerance which will be limited to small and, of course, right-thinking, if not Right, *minorities*.[13]

Whatever may be thought of this position, it is closely related to the kind of thinking that went into the theory of social-fascism. The theory of social-fascism erased the difference between liberal (or social) democracy and fascism; the theory of repressive tolerance virtually erases the difference between tolerance and intolerance.

If a movement suffers from too much tolerance rather than from too much intolerance, it might well ask itself whether there is something wrong with it as well as with the society that is able to tolerate it. The theory of repressive tolerance encourages such movements to blame society for what may well be their own weaknesses. Such movements virtually beg for intolerance to save themselves from being corrupted by tolerance.

Some people are hard to please. They used to complain that American society was too intolerant, and, indeed, there have been periods of disgraceful intolerance. Professor Marcuse, however, complains that it is too tolerant and that too much tolerance is the same as intolerance or repression. He argues, in effect, that it is necessary to have a good, just, and free society to achieve a non-repressive tolerance. But good, just, and free societies are hard to come by. If we had such societies, the issue of tolerance would not arise. It is precisely in humanly imperfect societies that tolerance is needed and should be valued the most. Yet it is precisely in societies where the never-ending struggle of good against evil, justice against injustice, freedom against tyranny can be carried on openly and even legally that Professor Marcuse's attack on tolerance is most pertinent and damaging. One wonders what people in a truly intolerant society would think if advised that they should not yearn and strive for tolerance because it would be another form of repression.

In substance, Professor Marcuse's position boils down to little more than a plea for the dictatorship of a self-appointed, "enlightened" minority. The hidden premise is that this minority knows what is good for all of us; that it is in possession of a truth which enables it to distinguish infallibly between "regressive movements" and "progressive tendencies" (if not infallibly, who is going to be the judge?); that it would limit itself to intolerance against the Right; that it would not turn its intolerance inward against factions, heretics, and rivals on the Left (always condemned to extinction, of course, because they "play into the hands of the Right"); that it would not prove vulnerable to all the temptations and perversions of revolutionary elites in the past. No matter how Professor Marcuse tries to dress it up, his essential thought again suggests how hard it is to have an original idea. His "repressive tolerance" and "totalitarian democracy" are, in effect, no more than new labels on old goods. Four decades ago, similar goods were labeled "social-fascism."

The consequences for the newest Left have been equally disastrous. This updated version of the theory of social-fascism has helped to estrange the New Left from all those who prize tolerance, just as the old version estranged the Communists from all those who prized democracy. The more extreme the Left is, the more it needs tolerance, and, yet, paradoxically, the more intolerant it is likely to be. Professor Marcuse himself remarks that "tolerance is first and foremost for the sake of the heretics."[14] But he reserves his tolerance for heretics of the Left. In substance, however, there is no meaningful difference between "discriminatory tolerance" and "discriminatory intolerance"; the operative term is "discriminatory." There is no meaningful difference between "repressive tolerance" and "re-

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[12] "The Ghost of Social-Fascism," COMMENTARY, February 1969, pp. 29-42.

[13] Herbert Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," in *A Critique of Pure Tolerance* (Beacon Press, 1965), pp. 82, 99, 110, for references in this paragraph. In his critique, *Herbert Marcuse: An Exposition and a Polemic* (Viking, 1970), Alasdair MacIntyre has also noted an analogy in Marcuse's thinking with the Communists' "social-fascism" but in a different connection (p. 77).

[14] Marcuse, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

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pressive intolerance"; the operative term is "repressive." If tolerance and intolerance are equally repressive, the very meaning of tolerance disappears. All that remains is playing with words for the sake of a slogan that is, I believe, specious in theory and pernicious in practice.

These variations on the old theme of social-fascism encouraged the New Left to cultivate intolerance and to court repression. As if existing conditions were not bad enough, a Black Panther leader said not long ago: "Basically what we're going to do is create conditions in which white folks are even going to have to kill pigs or defend themselves against black folks. We're going to turn Yale into a police state."[15] They did not get white folks to kill "pigs" or turn Yale into a police state. But they did get "pigs" to kill some Panthers, and they did create conditions in which it was almost impossible for the Panthers to function. The Weathermen tried much the same tactics with the same self-defeating results. A Weathermen leader exclaimed: "Well, if it [the revolution] will take fascism, we'll have to have fascism."[16] He did not get the revolution or fascism; he got a mortal crisis in the short life of the New Left. Both groups finally recognized that they were killing themselves far more than they were destroying anything else.

Thus, only by using words promiscuously and by fleeing from the specific and concrete historical reality can Weimar Germany and the United States today be made similar politically or socially. Weimar Germany had to come up from the depths; the United States has to come down from the heights. At some point, these two movements may seem to meet each other, as in the case of Weimar and the First World War and that of the United States and the Vietnam war. But even here it is still too early to tell whether the Vietnam war will breed a stab-in-the-back legend of Weimarian dimensions. The American people may rather heave a sigh of relief to get rid of the whole doomed, sordid business and want to put it behind them, as the French did after the Algerian war. A little of the Weimarian analogy may do us some good, to remind us that a democracy can commit suicide at the same time that it is being murdered. But too much of that analogy can only confuse and disarm us in a time of trouble. If America is heading for hell or heaven, it is probably going to get there in its own way and not in anyone else's.

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[15] Doug Miranda, New Haven captain of the Black Panther party, quoted by John Hersey, *Letter to the Alumni* (Knopf, 1970), p. 25.

[16] Harold Jacobs, ed., *Weatherman* (Ramparts Press, 1970), p. 343.

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Politics & ACLU

Joseph W. Bishop, Jr.

WITHIN the community of liberals the American Civil Liberties Union—now celebrating its fiftieth anniversary—has long occupied a place comparable to that of Dwight D. Eisenhower among Republicans. For half a century it has done more than any other organization to enforce the First, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States. It has also labored diligently on the Fourteenth, which (as construed by the Supreme Court, with some prodding from the Union's lawyers) now extends most of the Bill of Rights to state governments. ACLU, spreading the protection of the Constitution to more and more people, has also spread itself like a green bay tree, and flourishes mightily. Its contributing members number 150,000, or one hundred times as many as in 1921, when it was quite feasible to list each and every contributor in the annual report of its founder and long-time head, Roger Baldwin. Its annual cash income, in 1921 an exiguous $20,000 (which nevertheless sufficed for some considerable achievements), has registered an increase still more spectacular—it is now in excess of $2 million. The Union's resources are in reality much greater, for more than a thousand lawyers, some of them very talented, annually supply, without fee, services which would probably cost private litigants several million dollars. It has state affiliates, or so-called national chapters, in every state save Delaware and Idaho, plus several hundred local chapters.

These are impressive figures for a do-good organization. But the Union has impact and influence far out of proportion to its size and its tangible resources. It is a tireless and often effective lobbyist on Capitol Hill; it issues pamphlets and press-releases by scores and hundreds. Most of them land on target: in a period of approximately two years, no fewer than 311 stories in the New York *Times* alone reported the Union's doings and sayings.* It would be hard to name another private organization which comes close to matching this record. Nor does the Union rely wholly on propaganda and persuasion; its lawyers actively litigate about a hundred major cases a year. And all of these activities are duplicated in the provinces by the affiliates and chapters.

As the Union's Legal Director, Melvin L. Wulf, sees it, all this activity is no more than a desperate stand at Armageddon, with the forces of Evil, under the gonfalons of Richard M. Nixon, John N. Mitchell, and J. Edgar Hoover, threatening at any moment to overwhelm the frail defenses of the Constitution. The best that Mr. Wulf could find to say in 1969 was that "we are not yet a fascist state in general." There is no evidence that his mood is any more sanguine today; indeed, the suggestion by seven (or perhaps eight) of the Justices of the Supreme Court in the New York *Times* case that there might be circumstances in which the government could restrain the publication of classified documents, caused him to compose a piece ("Tragedy of 'The Times'") in which he virtually despaired of the Republic.

But this dyspeptic view is not general, inside or outside ACLU. A more dispassionate appraisal would be that the Bill of Rights, though its enforcement is far from perfect and its defense requires eternal vigilance, is at least in better shape than ever before in our history. The press, as recently demonstrated, has never been more free. (The segment of the radical press which likes to play at being "underground" is in fact not merely above-ground and visible but downright blatant. Its editors and publishers rarely risk anything worse than harassment by their creditors; its occasional difficulties with the law are caused by its penchant for pornography and scatology rather than its politics.) People accused of crime have more safeguards than they ever had before and probably more than in any other country in the world. The basic democratic principle of one-man-one-vote is approaching reality. Political dissent has reached new heights of loudness and looniness. A stroll around Times Square shows how far we have come since the days when the cops raided Mae West and people who wanted to read *Ulysses* had to buy a copy in Paris and smuggle it through the customs. As Professor Alan M. Dershowitz of Harvard Law School, until very

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* I am indebted to George A. Bermann, a recent graduate of Yale Law School, who spent many hours digging in the *Times* Index and the microfilms of the Sterling Library.

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recently a member of the ACLU's national board of directors, put it a few months ago, "The long-term trend is clearly in favor of decreased repressiveness and increased democracy." If this is so—and I think it is—the American Civil Liberties Union deserves a very large part of the credit.

DESPITE its impressive record of accomplishment, all is not bliss and harmony, gas and gaiters, within the family of civil libertarians. ACLU in 1971 is probably a more controversial organization than at any time in its long and generally stormy career, which is saying a lot. The Union has, of course, routinely been accused of advocating Communism, pornography, polygamy, and atheism, whenever it defended the right of people who *did* favor these things to try to persuade others to their way of thinking. But the charge today is that the Union has itself embarked on a series of political crusades which may be moral, or even right, but which have no readily discernible connection with the cardinal political virtue which it is chartered to defend; in effect, that it is being metamorphosed by its present active and activist management into an organism as totally different from the one which Roger Baldwin founded as the Chase Manhattan Bank is from the Manhattan Company, which the State of New York chartered as a water company in 1799. This time, moreover, the accusations come from within the Union, from people who can by no stretch of the imagination be described as enemies of freedom or opponents of social change, as well as from its traditional detractors.

A paradigm of the internecine strife among civil libertarians is the bitter and continuing row within the New York Civil Liberties Union over "community control" of public schools, particularly in the former Ocean Hill-Brownsville demonstration district. The NYCLU, controlled by an "activist" majority and headed by Aryeh Neier (who has since become the Executive Director of the national parent body), plunged into the fray on the side of what it supposed to be the community, thus necessarily involving itself in an envenomed conflict with the United Federation of Teachers, several of whose members the new school board was attempting to expel from the district. The war whoop of the dominant faction was "social and distributive justice," a phrase having about the same precision of meaning as most slogans, but which was said to be the *sine qua non* of true freedom. A dissident faction protested that community control, whatever its merits or demerits, was a pure political issue, having nothing to do with the Bill of Rights. It seemed, indeed, to these Mensheviki that the proper issue for the NYCLU was the right of the teachers not to be sacked without the process due them under the law—and that on that issue the NYCLU had not only taken the wrong side, but had accompanied its action with gratuitous, inflammatory, and infuriating rhetoric. The immediate *casus belli* is no longer an acute problem—"community control" turned out to be something less than a burning issue to the actual inhabitants of the communities, who had not been much consulted by their self-elected champions—but the hostility between "activists" and "traditionalists" is still intense and is reflected in the parent organization, where both factions have partisans.

ACLU itself, as distinguished from its New York affiliate, was not directly involved in the decentralization brawl; its stated policy on community control of schools is pragmatic and carefully hedged and, indeed, insists on the teacher's access to school employment "regardless of race or ethnic origin." Although its constitution provides that the affiliates "shall act in accordance with the policies of the Union, with the understanding that the purpose of this requirement is to obtain general unity rather than absolute uniformity," it is a considerable understatement to say that the rule is not strictly enforced. When, for example, ACLU a couple of years ago issued a very cautiously worded, not to say apologetic, condemnation of campus violence, the staff lawyers of the New York affiliate immediately and indignantly accused it of "joining the repressive forces of society."*

But the directors and members of ACLU itself are similarly divided between "activists" and "traditionalists." (The staff seems almost solidly in the activist, or hyperactivist, camp.) The former believe the Union's mission is to crusade for such political causes as find favor in their eyes. The latter have an aggravating habit of pointing out that the Union's own constitution provides that its objects "shall be to maintain and advance civil liberties, including the freedoms of association, press, religion, and speech, and the rights to the franchise, to due process of law, and to equal protection of the laws . . . wholly without political partisanship." Those of the activists who bother to debate the question reply that the Constitution of the United States, read with the eyes of faith, hope, and sometimes charity, mandates Good and prohibits Evil. The draft violates the Constitution; so does the war in Vietnam. On the other hand, the Fourteenth Amendment requires community control of schools (unless, of course, that con-

* This is as appropriate a spot as any to emphasize the point that it is very unfair, but unfortunately very easy, to judge ACLU by the harebrained harangues sometimes emitted by local affiliates and local staffers over whom the national board has no control and not much influence. The problem is compounded by the frequent failure of the press to distinguish between the national organization and the affiliates; to most reporters they are all ACLU. Some of ACLU's own propaganda contributes to the confusion. A recent circular, signed by ACLU's Executive Director, states that "in thousands of courts across the country, in the state legislatures" and Congress, ACLU is resisting what Mr. Neier calls "a concerted attack on American liberties." This reference must be intended to include many of the activities of the affiliates and chapters.

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trol is exercised by the wrong people); the Fifth confers on the citizenry the right to live in an unpolluted, if somewhat buggy, environment, although not the right to use automobiles, air-conditioners, or insecticides. As phrased by the articulate Mr. Wulf, modestly speaking for "some of us who have some responsibility for the expanding role of the Union," "the true scope of civil liberties . . . can be as broad as the possibilities of the Bill of Rights." This approach to constitutional law in its essentials differs very little from that which the National Association of Manufacturers used to advance against the National Labor Relations Act, the Securities Acts, and the rest of the seditious innovations of the New Deal. The less lawyer-like activists take the simple and forthright position that "Hyde Park speeches or Tom Paine leaflets" (the quote is from a Vice Chairman of the NYCLU) are very much less important than the struggle for "social justice" (not further defined) and the abolition of poverty, not merely in the United States, but also on the rest of the planet. I am myself in favor of social justice and against poverty, but I suspect that ACLU has a better chance of preserving individual freedom in the United States than it has of curing all the ills of the entire human race.

Despite the evangelistic sermons, most of what ACLU *does* still bears a reasonable relation to the old-fashioned goals set forth in its constitution. It opposes, for instance, all the ingenious devices for bailing out Catholic schools with the taxpayers' money; likewise it criticizes tax exemptions for religious property. It challenges the constitutionality of locking up people accused of crime when this is done not because they are likely to flee the jurisdiction (which is the only valid reason for denying liberty to those who have not yet been convicted), but because a judge is persuaded that they are likely to commit more crimes while awaiting trial. It fights unwarranted restrictions of the franchise, such as long residence requirements. Its opposition to censorship, whether of obscene movies or obscene politics, is firm and consistent. Such campaigns occasion no adverse comment by even the most conventional and unimaginative civil libertarians, like me. The new civil libertarians at least tolerate these traditional activities, although they plainly find them about as exciting as Civic Virtue. But they do not regard them as a sufficient excuse for the Union's existence.

THE charge is also made that the Union's ardor in the defense of dissenters is greater when the dissenter is of leftish persuasion than when his deviation is to the Right. And in fact one is struck immediately by the general homogeneity of the politics of the people ACLU supports—draft resisters, black militants, campus radicals, bellicose peace demonstrators, and the like. Each of these groups has, of course, its own particular cause, but each is in general sympathy with the others; the *Weltanschauung* of almost all of them is that of the *Village Voice* and the *New York Review of Books*. The major difference of opinion among the various sects of the faithful probably concerns the degree of force which is necessary and proper to usher in the millennium. The moderates and trimmers are willing to give the electorate a reasonable grace period within which to do God's will, before being forced to the conclusion that democracy is merely a device of the Establishment for the frustration of Social Justice; some of them are even willing to accept the decision of the majority, although not happily. The ultra-progressives believe that radical reform necessarily and preferably entails a salutary preliminary cleansing with fire and gelignite. These, in the words of Samuel Butler, describing their 17th-century prototypes, "call fire, and sword, and desolation, a godly-thorough Reformation." The Union, of course, does not advocate any sort of violence; but a good many of its members and staffers undoubtedly view the terrorists as the ordinary law-abiding Catholic Irishman views the murderous fanatics of the IRA. They would not themselves burn banks, shoot policemen, or smuggle guns to imprisoned militants, but they have serious reservations about the propriety of repressing persons whose consciences dictate such forms of protest. Again I quote Mr. Wulf:

> . . . The crimes which the government is committing in the name of law and order are far more grave than the so-called crimes committed by private citizens, for the latter "crimes" consist of a disorganized conspiracy to force the government out of a brutal, aggressive war in Vietnam. . . .
>
> Another of the conspiracy's objectives is the improvement at home of the condition of the poor and non-white. That objective necessarily requires the reallocation of public and private resources, and it is in defense of the present inequitable *status quo* that the government commits *its* crimes.

The Union has in the past on rare occasions gone to court to defend the constitutional rights of dissenters whose political goals were, as it was at some pains to explain, abhorrent to decent people. As recently as four years ago, its lawyers persuaded the Supreme Court to overturn a Maryland court's injunction against the racist rabble-rousing of the National States Rights party. The only part of that party's platform (which can fairly be described as a mirror-image of the agitprop of the Black Panthers) which would have been likely, if only in the light of hindsight, to draw cheers at an ACLU meeting was its fervid denunciation of the then governor of Maryland, Spiro T. Agnew. But in none of the ninety-odd court cases listed in the most recent report of the Legal Director can it be said that ACLU is representing a right-wing client or cause. (It is involved in a peripheral aspect of the case of Sirhan Sirhan, but

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his politics, though they took the form of assassinating Robert Kennedy, are of the Palestinian Arab variety and do not really correspond to any color in the American political spectrum.)

In fact, the Union has in recent years had little occasion to concern itself with the liberties of the far Right. The John Birchers and so forth are at the moment conspicuously inconspicuous; the Ku Kluxers, though still responsible for some terrorism, would probably refuse to let the Union's lawyers represent them, even if such help were needed and offered. Less radical right-wingers, like the Young Americans for Freedom, are unlikely to do anything more seditious than denounce Mr. Nixon as a turncoat; their closest approach to violence is to sport "Nuke the Chinks" buttons—a policy which, however ill-considered, it is clearly lawful to advocate. The rightists' infrequent requests for help, like the Union's infrequent offers of help, are intended principally to embarrass the other party —as when, for instance, Governor Williams of Mississippi asked the Union to join him in suits to enjoin *de facto* segregation in Northern cities, or when Charles Morgan, the Director of the Southern Regional Office, offered to defend Lester Maddox's right to picket the offices of a couple of Atlanta newspapers. (Since Morgan did not propose to join Maddox's picket line, and nobody was threatening to arrest Maddox for picketing, it may be suspected that the offer, which was refused, was not intended very seriously.) A more substantial problem was presented by William F. Buckley's contention that his First Amendment rights are violated by the insistence of the American Federation of Radio and Television Artists that he must pay dues to the Federation in order to conduct his TV program. If Mr. Buckley's purpose in asking ACLU's help in his suit was to embarrass it, he plainly succeeded, for the national board took nearly a year to make up its mind to turn down his request.

The political uniformity of ACLU's clientele is thus not entirely a result of its own political predilections, except to the extent that potential right-wing clients may suspect that their reception in its offices would be somewhat reserved, or even chilly. But a study of its press releases and the comments of its spokesmen on current events does suggest that its views on freedom depend very much on who is interfering with whose freedom of speech or action. Thus, when the Chairman of the House Committee on Internal Security (the contemporary, and on the whole much subdued, avatar of the House Committee on Un-American Activities) proposed to publish a list of Old and New Left revivalists on various campuses, ACLU denounced it as an exercise of Congressional "power to smear individuals and organizations" and brought suit (successful in the District Court) to enjoin the publication. But I am not aware of any such nobly outraged reaction to Wright Patman's pillorying of the Penn Central Railroad and its officers and directors—some of whose alleged transgressions are, or are likely to be, the subject of litigation. Nor were there cries of "smear" when Representatives Abzug, Dellums, and like-minded statesmen and stateswomen proposed "hearings" to demonstrate that Mr. Nixon and his co-conspirators favor war crimes. I am not at the moment debating the propriety or legality of these Congressional publicity plays; I do suggest that it is hard to see why one is a "smear" and the others are not. Similarly, the New York Civil Liberties Union called on its members to boycott California grapes; but the Wisconsin affiliate denounced an advertisers' boycott of an "underground" paper. Both ACLU and the affiliates are properly critical of the use by the police of excessive violence on demonstrators; but criticisms of violent demonstrators have been few and gentle, usually being prefaced by tributes to their noble ideals.

The same selectivity is displayed in the Union's view of foreign governments. When Prime Minister Trudeau dealt (effectively) with the terrorist activities of the Front de Liberation du Québec, by issuing emergency regulations under Canada's War Measures Act, which for a limited period authorized search without judicial warrant, detention and questioning without the filing of criminal charges, and suspension of the right to bail, the Union reacted promptly and forcefully: "The Board expresses its sympathy with the efforts of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association to resist summary measures of repression, and urges efforts through the International League for the Rights of Man, as well as private efforts in this country, to raise from other sources the funds needed to meet the Canadian emergency"—the word "emergency," of course, having exclusive reference to Mr. Trudeau's counter-measures rather than to the FLQ's campaign of kidnapping and murder. But I am not aware of any similar preachments on the Castro regime, whose far more summary measures of far more severe repression ought to be far more offensive to American civil libertarians.

As a rule, however, the charge that the Union is a zealous defender of the right to disagree with ideas with which its management also disagrees is based less on its official statements of policy, as expressed in its Policy Guide, than on the statements of its staffers, who are not always careful to distinguish their personal opinions from those of ACLU. Policy Number 234, for example, which deals with military justice, advocates various reforms in the court-martial process (the most important of which has in fact been enacted since the policy was formulated in 1966) but certainly does not suggest that military courts are intrinsically unfair or demand their abolition. But Charles Morgan of the Southern Regional Office has been quoted as saying that "There's just no point in having any sort of

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trials conducted within the military. The military is incapable of understanding the Constitution."

The Legal Director, Melvin Wulf, some of whose remarks have already been quoted, is another staffer with an unfortunate talent, amounting almost to genius, for overstatement. He really seems to see no difference between the President and Vice President of the United States and Hitler and Goebbels. Mr. Nixon favors "The use of violence and brutality against individuals who are portrayed by the minister of propaganda [Mr. Agnew] as depersonalized instruments of revolution and anarchy, who are guilty of 'philosophical violence.'" Mr. Agnew believes that "crimes of ideology . . . may justifiably be suppressed. He therefore encourages the primitive use of government power—including imprisonment and censorship—against those who would prefer a different order of social priorities from his own." Mr. Wulf's style, although not distinguished by clarity or originality, is filled with a verjuiced rancor against people who do not see the light as it is given to him to see it. This makes his pronouncements better copy than the comparatively carefully phrased resolutions of the national board. He is, for example, bitterly critical of the lawyers for the New York *Times* in the Pentagon Papers case, who seemed to be more interested in winning their client's case on comparatively narrow (but adequate) grounds, than in insisting on a sweeping construction of the First Amendment which could not have been sold to more than one or two of the Justices. His cast of mind is understandable enough; if you really believe that America stands where Germany stood in 1932, that Dachau and Belsen are ready to reopen for business here in the United States, it is hard to maintain a sense of proportion. By the same token, as the sense of proportion atrophies, it becomes easy to entertain such apocalyptic and apoplectic visions.

The disease of utter humorlessness, it should be noted, is endemic among ACLU activists—a sad change from the days of Roger Baldwin and Ernest Angell—and sometimes produces episodes which have much the same quality of farce-tragedy that made great art of the disasters which used to overwhelm Buster Keaton. Eason Monroe, the Executive Director of the Southern California affiliate, wrote a scholarly eassay on the evils of censorship as an introduction, prominently advertised on the cover, to *The Illustrated Report of the President's Commission on Obscenity and Pornography*, published by Greenleaf Classics. The publishers had, however, failed to inform Mr. Monroe that the illustrations were far from scholarly, being largely taken from one of the Danish pornography fairs. (ACLU chastely described them as "sexually explicit.") When last heard from, Mr. Monroe, whose apparent function was to give the publication what the Supreme Court calls "redeeming social value," had retained counsel to sue Greenleaf Classics; the question of freedom to publish is viewed from a new angle when an eminent civil libertarian is himself placed in a scandalously false light.

A similar note is struck by the cryptic comment of the ACLU of the State of Washington, which had undertaken the defense of a group of alleged terrorists, on the disruption of the trial, including the macing of the Union's lawyer, the arrest of a number of spectators, and the citation of the accused for contempt of court: "In the wake of the collapse of the trial, a good deal of thinking is being done by people in the Washington affiliate about the ACLU role in major political [*sic*] prosecutions of radicals." (In general, ACLU's thinking about courtroom disruption seems to lead to the conclusion that the prosecutors and judges are to blame; the record is bare of criticism of unruly defendants and their lawyers. Indeed, the Union spent its money to reprint and circulate an article glorifying William Kunstler.)

LIKE the Legal Director, other staffers and many of the directors and members of the Union tend to see political persecution in every case in which the defendant is a radical—that is, of course, the right kind of radical. (The Union is unlikely to set up much of a howl about the political persecution of the Ku Klux Klansmen recently collared by the FBI on charges of blowing up school buses.) The Union's official policy is unexceptionable: the motivation—political, commercial, or personal—of a crime is irrelevant; the question is whether the particular conduct can constitutionally be made criminal. "For us," says the Policy Guide, "the single question is whether the act involved is the violation of a valid law or one we believe is invalid. In the latter case, we will defend the violation of law; otherwise we will not."

But the Union's intervention in some "political" cases is hard to square with its stated policy. Last spring the national board voted 49 to 5 "to provide direct representation to any or all of the six defendants in the Berrigan case who might want ACLU representation." The first reaction of most liberals is to applaud this decision. Second thoughts, however, leave me wondering what reason, other than warm sympathy for the Berrigans' doctrinal views, ACLU has for spending its time and cash—of which latter it has none to spare—in defending them and their catechumens. The statutes which they are accused of violating seem clearly constitutional: neither blowing up government property, nor even kidnapping Henry Kissinger, has yet been held to be a protected form of symbolic expression. The Berrigans and their acolytes are certainly not so friendless and unpopular that the Union's intervention is necessary to secure them due process and competent counsel. They have, in fact, been represented by squads of eager lawyers, some of them competent. Their press notices have ranged from friendly to adulatory; the average *Times* reporter can scarce-

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ly mention their names without genuflecting. There might indeed be a civil-liberties issue if the indictment were so patently unfounded and incredible as to justify the inference that its purpose was not to obtain a valid conviction but simply to harass and persecute. History is, however, full of evidence that there is nothing preposterous, or even improbable, in the proposition that religious zealots, convinced of the righteousness of their particular orthodoxy, may undertake criminal acts *ad majorem Dei gloriam*. The Brothers Berrigan are entitled to a fair trial, but so are thousands of defendants in whom the ACLU has expressed no particular interest.

The case of Captain Howard Levy, court-martialed for making statements designed to promote "disloyalty and disaffection" among enlisted men and for refusing to obey a lawful order, does present some genuine and important constitutional questions. But the case was not, on its facts, a good one for testing the First Amendment rights of servicemen—the charge of disobeying orders did not, in my opinion, raise any clear and substantial constitutional issue—and it certainly did not justify the extraordinary amount of time and money which the Union's lawyers devoted to litigating peripheral issues (such as the propriety of Levy's confinement while his conviction was under review in the military appellate courts) whose connection with the constitutional issue was at best tenuous. Perhaps the finest example of the triumph of zeal over realism was the filing of a petition for certiorari (denied by the Supreme Court) running to 53 pages, including appendices, and signed by no fewer than eight lawyers, *after* the issue (whether the lower federal courts had erred in refusing to enjoin the Army from even prosecuting Levy) had been made moot by the completion of the trial. The constitutionality of Levy's conviction could still, of course, be litigated all the way up to the Supreme Court and doubtless will be. It is not easy to perceive a reason for this hopeless and expensive effort—the petition may be described as a reckless hurling of mobs of frenzied but undisciplined adjectives upon the *chevaux-de-frise* of the Solicitor General—other than infatuation with Captain Levy's political philosophy.

ACLU's actual involvement in the various criminal prosecutions of Black Panthers has been limited to issues of due process, which so far have not proved very serious. More Panthers have been acquitted than convicted, some on evidence which might well have supported a finding of guilt. (The doubts of Yale's President that a black revolutionary could get a fair trial in the United States may have proved justified, but not in the way he meant. The fact is that the Panthers are likely to benefit from their right to trial by jury in precisely the way Ku Kluxers have traditionally benefited from Mississippi juries.) But some of ACLU's spokesmen swallowed whole the theory that the Panthers were being persecuted for their political views, not merely by being tried on trumped-up charges of murder and the like, but by being themselves murdered by the cops. The Executive Director of the Illinois affiliate, accepting unquestioningly and even eagerly the story that "some twenty-eight Panthers died in police shootings" in 1968 and 1969, concluded that there was a "nationwide pattern of police action against the Panthers." He added ominously that the crimes of the police against the Panthers were generating a "police-state atmosphere." His charges were promptly echoed by the then Executive Director of ACLU, John de J. Pemberton, who accused police across the country of "provocative and punitive harassment" of the Panthers. Mr. Wulf weighed in with a declaration that the state (meaning, apparently, the government of the United States) was "fascist" from the Panthers' point of view: "The evidence," he pronounced, "is clear now that there is a government plan to destroy the Black Panthers as an organized political movement." "Whether or not," he went on darkly, "there is a memorandum in Washington which sets out the details of the program, or a written or spoken agreement among law enforcement officers to include murder as one of the means of banishing the Party, there is encouragement and support from Washington for murder as an instrument of policy."

This lie (which, I should in fairness add, Mr. Wulf did not invent, but merely believed, repeated, and embellished in his own peculiar style) was demolished as thoroughly as such a lie can ever be demolished by Edward Jay Epstein's remarkable report in the *New Yorker* of February 13, 1971; Epstein concluded, after a thorough and objective investigation of the alleged twenty-eight deaths, that in only two was there substantial—although by no means conclusive—evidence of police aggression. But the conspiracy-to-murder-the-Panthers lie will probably have as many lives as the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, for it is the sort of lie that fills a large public demand. So far as my research in newspapers and other publications goes, Mr. Wulf still believes it, and I suspect also that in this respect he is not alone among the Union's activists.

In matters like these much depends, of course, on one's view of people whose crimes of violence are motivated, or said to be motivated, by ideology. I confess that I like the "political" criminal —and by that phrase I do *not* mean a man whose "crime" is the nonviolent expression of political ideas, however obnoxious, for that, under our Constitution, cannot be a crime—rather less than garden-variety felons. Muggers, porch-climbers, and securities swindlers do not, as a rule, give themselves airs of virtue. But the "political" arsonist or rapist, if the cops catch up with him,

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is anything but repentant: he glows, in fact, with self-approval. His crimes, he informs the victims (placing both nouns in quotation marks), were inspired by a superior wisdom and a morality too elevated to be comprehended by the dull wits of the electorate. Such an attitude is, of course, contagious; even criminals of lesser intellectual and moral pretensions are very ready to be persuaded that their homicides and robberies were in reality gestures of protest against the repressive System, and that they are, in fact, political prisoners.

In the same manner ACLU rationalizes in terms of civil liberties and the Constitution crusades whose purpose seems to me clearly political. Thus, the national board recently voted to give "top priority" to an end-the-draft campaign, resolving that the Selective Service Act is unconstitutional. But only by a process of self-hypnosis can a lawyer take seriously the idea that the draft will be held unconstitutional. The argument has been made in hundreds of cases since conscription was introduced in 1863; and not since that year (when a state court, which reversed itself a few months later, held that the federal draft was inconsistent with the militia clauses) has any court accepted it. Chief Justice Warren, speaking for the Supreme Court in 1968, said that "the [peacetime] power of Congress to classify and conscript manpower for military service is beyond question," and the Court is about as likely to hold otherwise in the foreseeable future as Cardinal Cook is to elope with Bella Abzug. As a *political* matter, it can, of course, be argued that the United States should rely on a volunteer army or even have no armed forces at all; but that should not be the business of the American Civil Liberties Union. Litigation to establish the *unconstitutionality* of the draft is simply a waste of money and time which its lawyers might better spend on real issues of civil liberty. It is nearly as unlikely that the Court will agree with the Union's contention that "the present military involvement of the United States in Southeast Asia is unconstitutional." As a political matter, that involvement may be very unwise, but unless and until Congress exercises its power to withhold men and money, it is sanctioned by the Constitution.

There are, of course, substantial and serious questions, with which ACLU is properly concerned, about the First Amendment rights of servicemen—whether, for example, a member of the armed forces can constitutionally be forbidden to speak contemptuously of the President and Congress, or to participate in a political demonstration in a foreign country. But in their number, variety, and, in some cases, implausibility and even pettiness, the Union's lawsuits against the military lead me to suspect that the underlying motivation is not so much to protect the civil liberties of servicemen and civilians from military encroachment as to gratify a political dislike of the armed forces, at least when they are controlled by the wrong civilian politicians. It is one thing to defend the right of servicemen to patronize off-post coffeehouses established to serve up hot coffee and hotter propaganda or to disseminate "underground" newspapers on the post; it is quite another to litigate the constitutionality of the Army's haircut regulations. There is probably no connection between short hair and military virtue: the Cavaliers, with their "long essenced hair," were beaten by the Roundheads; but the long-haired Spartan hoplites ("The Spartans on the sea-wet rock sat down and combed their hair") were the best disciplined and bravest warriors in Hellas. Yet however weak the military justification for the Army's regulation, the right to wear one's tresses in a pageboy bob is hardly of the same magnitude as the right to speak one's mind, and it is in the last degree unlikely that the courts will interfere with this aspect of military discipline. Likewise, nerve gas is nasty stuff, and, if I lived in Oregon, I would prefer to have the Army dispose of it somewhere else; but when it is reported that ACLU has filed suit to enjoin its shipment from Okinawa to Oregon I am quite unable to see the connection with civil liberty. And how can suits to enjoin underground nuclear blasts be reconciled with the Union's Policy Number 235, which says that "The ACLU does not believe that any question of civil liberties is involved in the issue of nuclear weapons testing"? Similarly, an effort to enjoin the Army Corps of Engineers from granting permits to drill in the Santa Barbara channel is not convincingly explained by the argument that the drilling would violate the Fifth Amendment by depriving the people of Santa Barbara of property without due process of law. (It may be noted in passing that neither I nor my diligent researcher found any other instance of concern for property rights.) Such crusades seem to suggest that the Union's management, dissatisfied with its limited role as the watchdog of the Bill of Rights, has decided to diversify by putting it in the business of protecting the environment—a field which is already somewhat crowded.

All of the crusades which seem to me to be motivated by political ideas other than the protection and promotion of civil freedom are marked by a strong hostility to the government. The degree of hostility varies, of course, with the degree of conservatism of the government in power, but I suspect that even Senator McGovern would not enjoy a long honeymoon. As Mr. Wulf puts it, "Governments, perhaps by their very nature, perceive every threat to the *status quo* and to their own power as an assault which justifies the use of physical force." This extraordinary statement recognizes no distinction between the governments of the Third Reich or Soviet Russia and that of the United States. It ought to be too obvious to require saying that in my lifetime, and Mr. Wulf's, the

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United States has undergone enormous changes, some of which Mr. Wulf would probably regard as good. Some of these changes were resisted by the governments in power when they were first proposed, but very rarely by jailing or shooting the proposers. I expect that the United States will change as much in the next fifty years as it has in the past fifty, and I expect that it will do so more or less peacefully.

The government of the United States is, in fact, one of that small minority among the earth's governments which *does* provide for change by democratic and constitutional means and in which there is no justification for resort to violence to coerce changes in policy. All historical experience tends to show that personal freedom can exist only in a fairly stable and prosperous society. Civil liberty is, in the last analysis, a luxury, although a very great one. The truth—maybe sad but nonetheless true—is that the ordinary specimen of *homo sapiens* would rather live under an absolutist government, which assures him two or three meals a day and protection against oppression by anyone except itself, than under a permissive and democratic government which does neither; an ordinary citizen of Calcutta would probably, if he could choose, trade his right to a free press (which is largely theoretical, because he hasn't the price of a newspaper and couldn't read one if he had), plus his right to damn the Congress party, for the relatively full rice bowl of an ordinary citizen of Canton. A man whose government does not protect him from thieves and marauders is likely to lose concern for criminal due process and to support the first strong man who promises short shrift for criminals. The stability of the government of the United States and the survival of the liberties provided by its Constitution depend on its continued ability to enforce its constitutional laws by constitutional methods—including laws which are unwise, but not unconstitutional.

It ought therefore to be a truism that in this country the public interest and the interest of the government are not always, or even very often, antithetical. But the "activists" within ACLU, who are so strongly represented in its professional staff—i.e., its active management—barely recognize that the public has any interest at all in the government's preservation of stability and order or in the protection of the United States from internal and external violence. In the New York *Times* case, the most that ACLU's brief in the Supreme Court conceded, and that grudgingly, was that the government "could conceivably" prevent publication of secret codes, designs of new military equipment, and plans for military operations—but not if their publication would be "of value in permitting citizens to render an informed judgment on public issues." This criterion has a fine ring, but it would have permitted publication of the Allies' plans for the invasion of June 6, 1944 or Israel's plans for the air strike of June 5, 1967. Knowledge of either of these important government decisions would doubtless have contributed to informed public discussion of many issues, but I suspect that not even Justice Black, faced with such circumstances, would really have held that publication could not be restrained. A few years ago, in *United States* v. *Robel,* the Supreme Court struck down a statute which made it unlawful for a member of the Communist party to work in a defense plant, regardless of whether there was any evidence that he was himself likely to engage in espionage or sabotage. Chief Justice Warren said that "nothing we hold today should be read to deny Congress the power under narrowly drawn legislation to keep from sensitive positions in defense facilities those who would use their positions to disrupt the nation's production facilities." But the ACLU's position, when Congress was attempting to draft legislation sufficiently precise and narrow to satisfy the First Amendment, was that "we would of course oppose this section even if it met every standard set down in *Robel.*" In the eternal process of balancing the public's interest in security and stability against its interest in personal freedom, it is difficult to think of any recent instance in which the Union has been willing to give any weight at all to the former. The gravestone of the Weimar Republic ought to be a reminder of the fact that there is, after all, some public interest in allowing a democratic and constitutional government to protect itself.

THE Union's chronic hostility to government is mirrored by its general indifference to assaults on freedom of speech and association by various New Left groups, which on campuses, at least, are a much more serious threat to First Amendment freedoms than are the cops. The Union's official *policy* is impeccable: "The ACLU considers it important to emphasize that it does not approve of demonstrators who deprive others of the opportunity to speak or be heard, or physically obstruct movement. . . ." But actions to implement these commendable principles have been few and feeble—an occasional letter to the newspapers expressing disapproval of some unusually outrageous disruption, such as the shouting down of pro-war speakers at Harvard last March. (Many similar episodes seem to have altogether escaped the notice of the Union and its spokesmen.) There have been no interventions, no briefs *amici curiae,* no press releases supporting authorities who tried to prevent or punish such violence. On the contrary: when the University of Connecticut obtained an injunction against the making on campus of obscene and disruptive statements in connection with demonstrations against recruiters representing corporations with defense contracts, the Union sought to have the injunction overturned in the Supreme Court, and

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Mr. Wulf lectured the Court severely for its refusal to review the case. The NYCLU promptly and loudly denounced the police for using excessive force in the 1968 Columbia disorders, but had no unkind word for the violent demonstrators—an assessment of guilt which is not supported by the Cox Commission's Report. Neither, apparently, does the Union support legislation intended to curb such interferences with free discussion, like a bill which would authorize the Attorney General to seek injunctions against "disruptive noise" at public gatherings. But it is very sensitive—properly so—to private interferences with the New Left's right to express itself: when printers, for example, refused to set type for an issue of *Scanlan's Magazine,* which consisted largely of what the printers regarded as a sort of Field Manual for urban guerrilla warfare, including a how-to-do-it piece on the construction of cheap, simple, and efficient bombs, the Union's Executive Director announced his intention to sue the printing company. The Union's policy on disruptive students attempted to salve their sensibilities by acknowledging that they were "moved by conscience to use extraordinary means [a euphemism for violence] in the belief that ordinary means have failed in creating a more just and equal social order." Although the printing-shop foreman said that it was "a matter of conscience" for him, and presumably thought that the social order would be none the better for an infusion of pipe bombs and Molotov cocktails, he got no similar encomium from the ACLU.

PERHAPS it is too much to expect any special-interest pressure group to be fair or objective in its attitude to what it regards as the enemy. Moreover, the Union suffers from a problem created by its very success: to find new battles and victories its staff seems to think that it must push farther and farther toward, and beyond, the outer limits of freedom (not only of speech, but of action) and must, indeed, become a political pressure group. But the Union's attitude toward a constitutional and democratic government need not and should not be always, or even usually, that of Ralph Nader to General Motors. The Union has done far more good than harm. I *think* it still does, but the question seems to me much closer than it used to be. The policies of its present management risk a considerable, and I think undesirable, change in its base of support—from a large number of people, having very different political views, but sharing a common belief in the virtues of the Bill of Rights, to a rather smaller and politically homogeneous group whose belief in civil liberties for everybody, including oldthinkers, is in some cases very dubious.

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* * *

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The Saga of Great Men

A Story

E. M. Broner

To look great, to act great, is to be great.
—H. Fussiner, painter

A. The Primitives

AMONG the fur cutters was one cutter who possessed a leonine head, sported a large snout, expanded a bull chest. This animal of a man they called Leib Bear, Lion Bear. His supervisors felt there was an unusual being in their midst and, though he had done nothing of special note, he was one to be watched.

The ladies in the union also watched him. He was already unfaithful to his wife, which was unusual in the fur cutters union.

It so happened it was the time of the Depression. The fur cutters had built their housing project and the WPA Art Center located itself nearby. Leib Bear began taking painting lessons in the night classes. Soon the vitality and competitiveness of the man appeared in his art. His memories were more vivid than those of his co-cutters, his depictions more dramatic. In his scenes from the old country he equalled the prose of Sholem Aleichem. In the folk tales of his canvases, blood and wolves abounded.

Came time for the WPA Adult Evening Class Exhibition, Leib Bear entered not a single canvas but a series: *The Wedding, The Sleigh Trip, Followed by Wolves, Throwing Guests to the Wolves, The Survivor*, who was the bridegroom, now canine himself.

The Sunday *Times* reviewed the show, comparing Leib Bear's work to *The Rake's Progress*, as a rich literary series depicted visually. The fur cutters read the review. They also recognized themselves in the paintings, with especially good spots for the supervisors. The Bridegroom-Wolf was a surly worker, a wife beater, and it served him right.

Leib Bear's success was an honor for his union as well as for himself. The union relieved him of all fur-cutting duties and appointed him Painter Laureate. Within the month Leib Bear left his wife and baby son to move two apartment buildings over, from H to J, where he could have his own studio. His wife still brought up a jar full of borscht or chicken soup with farfel, and left the jar outside of his apartment door, not to disturb the work.

Others beside the faithful wife found their way to the fifth floor walk-up of the project apartment. A reporter and photographer visited him there, recording his philosophy on art and photographing the *shtetl* scenes of stumpy peasants or Leib Bear's ambitious fur cutters' working scenes.

Leib Bear was also photographed at his table, one hand on the oil cloth, the other fitting into a cut-glass of tea. A piece of sugar sparkled in his mouth. The light came in harshly from the window, but something else had also come in. Just inside the window, pecking unnoticed on leftover coffee cake, was a pigeon.

Leib Bear was annoyed to share the newspaper portrait with the pigeon. He wrote a complaining letter to the *Times*: "Man vs. Bird. Which is more important, I ask you?—the painting or the viewer, the man or his pet, the artist or the accidental pigeon? Why then give them equal importance by putting both the painting and the viewer into one snapshot or by putting an artist and that migrant bird into another?"

Perhaps the publicity stimulated the invitations for touring exhibitions, but it was also the time of the discovery of Americana, Horace Pippin, Pennsylvania Dutch folk art, and the city primitive.

Yet, as things pass, the Depression ended. And, gradually, interest in the career of the Fur Cutter diminished, for styles were changing. No longer were oratorios on American towns commissioned from composers, and musicals about peace, like Johnny Johnson, had little audience. Leib Bear was still a hero to those of the housing project and to his union, but no more reviews appeared, no four-column cuts.

The children of the project were growing up. Among them was one young student, blue-eyed, light-haired, whose blonde mother was one of the attractive middle-aged ladies of the union.

E. M. BRONER, the author of *Journal/Nocturnal and Seven Stories*, is currently on leave from Wayne State University and will spend the next year in Israel conducting writers' workshops. "The Saga of Great Men" is part of a series in progress.

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This student always greeted Leib Bear respectfully and inquired after his work. One afternoon when the student took off his cap to Leib Bear, the painter asked, "Do you want to see the work of a great man?"

Five flights up Leib Bear opened the door and said, "Isn't that something? Say that isn't something."

"That's really something," said the boy.

Leib Bear hosted the afternoon. He offered a choice of a glass tea or chicken soup which he heated from the jar. They talked.

"A sense of reality is inborn," proclaimed the painter. "When we receive too much training then reality dissipates. It becomes surreal." That was, for Leib Bear, the greatest harm which could befall art. It was what someone with his peasants skinny and celestial, someone named Chagall, had come to.

"If you make people earthy, they stick to the earth," said Leib Bear. "But give them too much soul, too much of the spiritual, and they float right to the top of the canvas."

The student was enchanted. Each day he climbed the stairs to speak with Leib Bear or to study the scrapbooks. A great man has a right to speak of himself, although Leib Bear would always ask, "How is your dumpling mother?"

Leib Bear did have contact with the widowed mother. He now supervised the adult art classes, and the mother had signed up for painting. Leib Bear took an interest in her progress, and told the student, "Last night she did something. For the first time."

That night, May 12th, 1943, the mother would always remember, she looked at her canvas and yelled, "I made the kitchen! It's just the kitchen!"

In June, on the 27th, the woman won the Blue Ribbon Prize for the student show. Her *Sabbath Table* was the award winner.

The student climbed the five flights to Papa Leib Bear, only to find the door closed. After a while Leib Bear opened it a crack.

"Well," he asked, "and what do you think of your mother's work?"

"I like your work," said the student carefully, "but my mother's good too."

Leib Bear closed the door and never spake they again.

Lives of adversaries cross. Leib Bear and the woman were asked to exhibit in a two-painter show. Leib Bear refused to show with a beginner, so the mother held her exhibition alone. From that show she was invited to exhibit at a 57th Street gallery.

The *Herald Tribune* headed its review, "Scenes of Russia." There was praise for the sculptural effects, for the unspoiled vigor and intensity of the woman. This was in contrast to Papa Leib Bear, said the reviewer, whose work had become slicker and more commercial. *Snow in Central Park* was reproduced in four columns. The mother wore the review inside her brassiere and took the terms seriously. She decided that if she were sculptural, she would go into sculpture. She began to embrace every object for its solid shape. The son took a snapshot of her going into the country and embracing a cow.

Before he was even a man, the son was drafted into the army in World War II. The mother continued to exhibit and the son, in basic training, received her press clippings.

On one letter she postscripted, "Leib Bear gave up his studio-apartment to move back with his wife and son. He is giving the son material for a book on the father's philosophy of art. 'Write my biography now,' he tells the boy, 'While I'm still here to correct it.' "

The woman's son at an Air Force base in damp England folds the letter and wonders. When the Nazis are defeated, what will await him at the Project? Will he once again climb stairs to a studio-apartment, this time to discuss philosophy of art with his mother? Will he be writing *her* biography? The son continues to have Bonds deducted from his pay and sent to his mother, but he discontinues correspondence.

"Life is too continuous," he decides.

The mother, active in her career, makes Bond speeches before Senior Citizens, gives painting demonstrations at the YMHA, and is somewhat relieved that she need no longer spend time in correspondence, transliterating with difficulty into those hard English words.

When they do meet again the son has signed up at the Art Students League for classes. He concentrates on portraits, for which he wins top prize in the League show, portraits of people from the Project, the old fur cutters, his mother and Leib Bear.

B. The Violinist

Summers there lived in the town of Grey Hills a musician who taught winters at Juilliard, Curtis, the University of California (at Santa Barbara), and, one year, at Tokyo University.

When the musician played a solo violin concert or performed duets with Sascha Jacobson, Joseph Fuchs, or Michael Rabin, the little log cabin of Klaver String School was full, the stuffed moose head mounted on the back wall nosed the audience, the perspiration from the brows of the performers fell on the shoes of those in the front row.

During intermission there was a great writhing of folding chairs as the audience pushed them aside to get to the side walls for a view of the private-public life of the violinist who had founded this String School. There were browning photos of the old Klaver Quartet, moustaches all. There were autographed photographs from boyish Menuhin and Stern. The audience was invited

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to the wedding photo of the Klavers, Marvin standing next to the chair where his seated wife billowed with veil, train, bouquet, and yardage of brocaded satin.

There were personal tributes, documents, letters. Franklin Delano Roosevelt thanked Marvin Klaver for concertizing for Bonds. Bess Meyerson, in a recent letter, thanked the Maestro for performing at a peace rally. Such documents were intermixed with reproductions of paintings depicting the world of art: Delacroix's full figure of angular Paganini, Delacroix's boldly brushed head of Chopin (the painter was also a music critic). There was Degas's photographic painting of woodwind players in the orchestra pit, Picasso's Blind Guitarist, Brahms at the Piano (gross Brahms at the delicate instrument), Robert Henri's casual group of sweatered musicians.

The audience would look at the pictures of Madame Klaver resting on a summer deck chair or in an ornate straw chair, while Marvin stood beside her in white flannel pants, navy jacket, and foulard. They never were photographed standing, for Madame was two heads taller than the Maestro. As was Bess Meyerson, bending way over, while Marvin Klaver is standing on tiptoes to kiss her at the aforementioned rally. Marvin Klaver is also standing next to Jack Benny, both holding their violins and smiling after raising funds for an orchestra pension plan.

Marvin Klaver was a great man and a lucky man. It was said of him that if he lost his Stradivarius, an even more valuable instrument would be returned to him. When he aged, there was no brittleness but a mellower tone. He did not become obscure; if anything, somewhat notorious. There he is on the wall talking to Dick Cavett on the occasion of his new violin concerto for the opening of the UN. He is in tuxedo, even on that talk program.

Friends joked that when Marvin Klaver called his stockbroker in New York City from Grey Hills the stock was always selling at a premium. Where string students generally fell off in interest, applications to Klaver Hall were more than could be accommodated. If scholarship money was lacking everywhere, friends and patrons of Klaver saw to it that there were always Black, American Indian, and Oriental students studying at Grey Hills for the summer.

The opening and closing concerts were great occasions. Klaver performed at each opening, and performed again at the end of the season, with the entire string student body. Each concert he would begin by bowing and dedicating the performance, "To My Lovely Wife."

If people asked, "Do you have children?" he would bring out quarter-size violins that he carved in his spare time.

Not only was Marvin something of a character, but there are many stories told of his wife, known for the way she smoothed all things relating to her husband—his hair, his concert life, his correspondence with the world.

One summer-story circulating among the students some time ago told of how Marvin Klaver and his wife Wilma went walking through the woods of Grey Hills. An eccentric old man who owned the woods came out of his house with a shotgun.

"Stop there!" said the old man. "You're trespassing. Furthermore—"

"One moment," said Wilma.

She opened the carpet bag which she always carried with her and pulled out of it a camp stool, setting it up for Marvin so he could be comfortable during the bawling-out.

The old man backed away from them and told townspeople: "How can you raise cain with a man whose wife has just opened up a chair for him?"

Another time her husband had trouble getting the body shop in Grey Hills to fix his VW. Wilma marched in imperiously and, with her clipped German accent, told the mechanics, "My husband is a top executive with the Volkswagen. He must have his car within the two hours." The mechanics rushed to repair it, confused because they had always known Mr. Klaver as a summer resident who had the music school. But maybe he ran Volkswagen on the side.

Wilma was a gardener, turning the hill behind their white summer house into what Marvin called "a plantation" of cucumbers, great zucchini, moonsized tomatoes, huge sunflowers. Wilma hated the small and delicate, scorning pansies and petunias for stalks, bushes, orchards.

She would load the VW with her vegetables and flowers and present them to needy looking people, like the Penobscot Bay Indian family who lived in a tar-paper shack on the road to Grey Hills, to lobstermen shopping at the lobster co-op, also presenting sunflowers to their tired wives waiting for them in the car. She handed out tomatoes to skinny string students who strolled in suits and white shirts through the town, even on the sunny days, always formally attired.

Time passed at Grey Hills and those soft photos of Wilma in her straw hat, or Wilma carrying an armful of sunflowers, faded. New young string groups came to Klaver Hall to perform. The Cleveland String Quartet played Bartok marvelously. The St. Claire Quartet from Detroit played Haydn and Mozart. The Tokyo String Quartet played Beethoven as if Beethoven were Mozart. The movements of the quartet were as delicate as some ornamental Japanese vegetable, or like spread mushrooms, rose of radish, dwarf tree of broccoli. ("Japanese Beethoven," said the *Down East* music critic, who came each week for the concerts.)

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Stocky Marvin Klaver thinned around the neck and in his hair. He was still the great man of strings, with his outsized chin, but he was quieter and stooped some. It was noted that Wilma had not been down to the school. No one was invited to the Klaver home, and Marvin was abrupt with old friends who came up to Grey Hills from New York to lend their presence to Opening Concert.

The townspeople noted that the Klaver garden had fallen to weed. A woman would be brought in from New York for the summer season, ordering the groceries, re-adding the bill, and tipping the delivery boy.

It was a quiet life until last summer. Then Marvin Klaver began giving special instruction to a serious young violinist from Kyoto. They could be seen taking walks in the woods, but were undisturbed, for the old woodsman had passed away. He would dine with her in his study at Klaver Hall, both of them the same height, she slender with rich black hair, velvety eyes, and stems of legs under the miniskirt. She was the Japanese perfect miniature, the opposite of the sunflower.

This past summer the students of Klaver Strings were introduced to Toshiko and the baby, who had the outsized chin of his father, the marvelous black hair of his mother, and blue eyes with an epicanthus fold. He was lovely and lively, climbing up and down the stairs of the Hall during classes, practice, and concerts. The students shared baby-sitting so that Toshiko could continue with her lessons.

At the Opening and Closing concerts of this past season, Marvin Klaver dedicated the concerts, "To My Lovely Wife," while straw hats and sunflowers from the wall paid tribute to him. During the last concert of this season the baby tumbled on the stairs. He could be heard crying during Marvin's violin solo. The Maestro ignored the cries and the ticket-takers rushed out, bouncing the little boy, shh-shhing him. Toshiko, playing in the orchestra, could not rise, though her eyes skidded from the sheet music.

When the concert ended, Marvin Klaver looked up, bowed, signaled the orchestra to bow, and took Toshiko by the hand for a special bow.

"To My Wives," he said. "My Lovely Wives."

The back door, leading from Klaver's study, had been left open once the concert began. Beside it was a wheelchair with a terribly emaciated woman under a sunhat. The German housekeeper, carrying a carpet bag, was seated on a folding chair. Marvin and Toshiko came through the back door, with Marvin carrying the baby. Toshiko released the brake of the wheelchair and pushed it uphill to the white house. The bones of the woman in the chair moved slowly to the baby, patted its bottom, reached further to smooth Marvin's hair and to straighten the foulard. It turned the other way jerkily, a timepiece offbeat, to thank Toshiko, as the group of them ended the season.

C. The Secret Artist

THERE was a man who, for charm and appearance, could not be faulted. When he entered a gathering, he always departed with the most beautiful woman on his arm. When he was not in attendance at an affair, he was the person quoted. At art exhibitions of his students or of his contemporaries, catalogues were dedicated to Karl Kline, the inceptor of the work, the stylist who had most effect upon their careers.

Like Duchamp, Karl was historically important. He could be seen in art films made by the 8th Street Group and the Beat People. There is Karl in disguise as a Keystone Cop bopping Larry Rivers and David Amram on their heads. His forewords to catalogues, art reviews, and articles were published in *Jahrbücher* by his friends, printed on costly paper with hand-set type, limited in edition, and sent to the influential of the art world. All this in a slight man with clear hazel eyes and a rich speaking voice.

It was difficult not to be protective of him, he who was so generous in criticism and praise of the work of others, he whom men found to be a careful listener. Karl never imposed and yet was imposing.

One was always startled to learn that there had never been a public exhibition of the work of Karl Kline. Sources even differed about his work, elements of Abstract Expressionism, Magic Realism, or Pop being attributed to him.

He made it clear why he would not exhibit. *Arts* asked to come to his studio, but Karl said, "The artist who publicizes himself, ostracizes himself." Several galleries offered him exhibits sight-unseen, on the basis of his reputation, but Karl would reply, "I do not care to exhibit. Exhibitionism is fetishism."

The Museum of Modern Art sent someone in their publications department to interview him. Kline told the assistant editor, "To acknowledge a style is to deny all others. To allow classification is to forbid change."

Yet those who cared for him were ambitious on his behalf. Wherever he lectured or summered, mail would follow urging him, at last, to allow a one-man show.

He would be baking his own anadama bread in Vermont, making fish chowder and a casserole of zucchini creole, when the mail would arrive: from a glassblower now teaching at the Central School of Design in London, who had been a former student of Karl's. The glassblower had arranged a show for Karl at the ICA in London, for it was Karl to whom he owed his success, Karl urging the boy into glassblowing while it was still a new field. If he were a guest lecturer at the University of Florida in Gainesville, a Haifa jeweler would have her letter forwarded to him, telling him that she had arranged a show at the

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Bezalel in Jerusalem, all this from a woman Karl had met at a symposium in Manhattan five years earlier, and with whom he had had a long, careful correspondence. At the University of Albuquerque, where he was writing an article on American Indian sophistication for *Arts International*, Karl would be phoned by the State Department, for the Salon de Mai in Paris wished his suggestions in the selection of three invited American artists. In Bennington, jurying their annual art fair, he would be cabled by the British Printmakers Council, asking him to jury for them.

Some said Karl could not sustain relations except by long distance. That is not true. Ask the women who summered with him in Marlboro. His touch was light, his demands lighter still. And he was always civil, always available in Vermont or in his apartment in Manhattan.

In the winter evenings in New York, friends felt free to drop in. Karl would set down his book to greet them, a *Sherlock Holmes* he was reading aloud to a nephew, the *I Ching*, with which he was casting his fortune, *The Soncino Edition of the Pentateuch and Haftorot* that a young rabbi was explicating for him, the *Japanese Country Cookbook* which he had ordered from Tokyo and was trying out with a young Japanese girl living in his apartment.

It was Andy whom Karl's friends phoned when she came back, two summers in a row, from a month with Karl in Marlboro.

"What was Karl doing?" they asked.

"Being private or being public," said Andy.

She would divulge nothing, and no one questioned further, from the authority of her good New England stock, her crisp manner, and the notice her pottery was getting at America House.

But Andy had mixed loyalties, those to her host's reticence and to the recognition due him as a long-time painter. Invited for the coming summer, she allowed his friends to prevail upon her. Only Andy could pull it off, for she knew Karl's style, thoughtful play and playful work. She was that way herself, potting for pleasure but selling well at the same time. She worked out a technically difficult series of bowls, yet each bowl in the series was fun. She did begging bowls for people she thought needed humility, and loving bowls for people she loved. She made, and sold, as a gimmick, hating spoons with ragged edges to cut the tongue or with a hole in the center for weight-watchers.

Lovely Andy, twenty-five, and Karl, fifty, jived that summer. They plotted their fun. Once they appeared in their usual seats at the Marlboro Chamber Group with body and face paint in brilliant reds and pale yellows. They sat primly and nakedly through the concert. Once they shopped at the IGA, wearing letter sweaters, carrying a megaphone, and singing, from opposite ends of the supermarket, the names and prices of the canned goods to each other. They leapt into the town's lily pond, wearing old coats they had purchased at an auction. They staged a rock festival at Karl's farm, with the classical Marlboro musicians, and Karl improvised a strobe light out of an electric potter's wheel and an aluminum tubing with holes for the turning spotlight.

During these weeks Andy planned Karl's debut. She phoned the critics in New York and Karl's friends in other fields—analysts, architects, botanists—to tell them to be at Karl's barn, a particular Sunday in August, for cocktails and dinner.

The summons was obeyed. Up came the periodicals, even the craft magazines like *Craft Horizons* or the small magazine *Pictures on Exhibit*, whose subscription list the publisher knew by heart. They came, driving, busing, emplaning.

Andy told Karl she had invited friends from New York for the summer solstice, people he enjoyed, such as Barbara Rose, Dore Ashton, Jack Canaday, Hilton Kramer. She phoned the Marlboro Lobster Pond to arrange for steamed clams and steamed lobsters. She sent people on a hunt for firecrackers and some wound up in Canada purchasing them. Andy silk-screened paper placemats and napkins in decorative motifs and weighted them under rocks against the wind, on the lawn picnic tables.

The people showed, Karl's friends and students who saw the notice for the exhibit posted at his art school.

"What is this?" Karl laughed.

"Unveiling," said Andy.

"Of your work?" asked Karl.

"No," said Andy. "Of yours."

Karl filled glasses with Sangria until the punch bowl was empty, then backed into the house for refills. It was a lawn of noise, people picking wildflowers and finding jars to put them into, arranging the Queen Anne's lace, brown-eyed Susans, the wild roses, people tasting savory and thyme from Andy's herb garden, smelling dill, squeezing mint leaves on their fingers.

A firecracker is set off.

"Who did that?" calls Andy.

The children who were brought up for the party run around with sparklers. It is still too light to see the sparklers, and the smaller kids burn their fingers grabbing at the tips.

A large boom, and a larger one yet.

"Too early," calls Andy. "Please wait everyone until dark!"

Many small cracklings and shootings, several large boomings. A sound like bombing. The barn begins to smoke.

One of the firecrackers has landed on the roof, whose wooden shingles burn. The fire falls into the barn on that old worn wooden floor. There is no phone to call the Fire Department. Several drive into town to tell them personally. The engines come, including a new one for which Karl

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had helped to raise money at an early summer benefit.

The barn is burning itself down. The guests watch in a large grouping a distance off. Parents hold onto children as walls cave and a pitchfork falls through a wall, the tines bent with the heat.

The house, a bit off, does not catch. The volunteer firemen hose down the remains of the barn, first wetting the dry field around it.

"You're lucky it wasn't wintah," says one of them, the butcher at the IGA. "In wintah there was a fire at the hadwah stoh and it was fierce weathah, sixteen below, and the hose froze. You're lucky it's summah."

The guests do not leave immediately. You cannot just leave a man after his barn and work have burned.

They stay and partake of steamed clams dipped into fluted paper cups of butter. They crack the lobsters with nutcrackers and pull the meat out with picks that the Lobster Pond has provided.

The men of the Fire Department stay around and have a bite to eat. Only one person leaves early, not waiting for dinner, coffee, or the fresh-baked blueberry pies. It is Andy.

D. The Ascensionist

THERE lived in the fishing village of Granitesville a young Jew who was set apart. His family had nought to do with the fishing, the sardine factory, or the granite quarry but they supplied, to the hunters who came in the fall for the deer season, yellow slicker tops and pants, heavy woolen shirts and thermal underwear. His family sold, to the wives of the fishermen, linoleum that cracked when it was unrolled, so long had it stood like chimney stacks at the back of the store. His family also sold buttons left from the 1930's; dusty greeting cards; cards of sewing snaps advertised by helmeted ladies indeed snapping to attention; toys, not charmingly old-fashioned, but 1950's plush dolls with plush stumps of arms and legs, perhaps a soldier with a plastic face, somewhat dented, with plastic helmet and chin strap.

The mother, overly made-up, the father, always in jacket and loud voice, the nervous, shy uncle, all three were in that store, so that a customer had no escape.

From the living quarters above the store, the son would watch customers leaving the store with dresses once blue, now a faded purplish grey, or with school clothes for the children that came to their calves, and had little cotton bows above the puckered bosom and little pockets under the high waist.

The family was fixated in time, the time when the father was a Wanamaker traveling salesman, and they still carried the same merchandise.

When the boy was not doing homework, his family called him downstairs to learn the trade. He was to invite ladies into the "Dressing Room" to change, although that private dressing room was the opened door of a chifforobe with a clothesline attached, over which hung a thirty-year-old unsold spread, and through whose door-crack the boy could see those hefty ladies changing.

On Saturday night when the Opera House showed Doris Day in *With Six You Get Eggrolls* or James Brown in *Tick Tick Tick* or the war film *Tora! Tora! Tora!* (Blacks and Japanese were equally rare and, therefore, it was all exotic movie fare), the son would hear his schoolmates roaming Main before the 8 P.M. show, calling, laughing, and phoning friends from the paybooth near the post office. Or he would see them parking in his parents' parking lot, near the pier, necking by moonlight, he peering at them as he did at the ladies who thought they were safe behind the chifforobe door.

The boy was not invited to the holiday parties, for he was not of those holidays. Nor was he invited to the weddings of his schoolmates who had just graduated from the high school, for they did not like to think of his being in their Advent church.

When he went swimming in the lily pond, the young girls from the sardine factory, who swam with pink plastic curlers in their hair (curlers purchased from Freestone's), giggled as he waded out in the water, and he would duck quickly in that shallow pond to cover his hairy legs.

"You'll inherit the business," his parents assured him while his uncle looked worried. "You'll carry on the family tradition—from peddler to proprietor."

The father would tell young Freestone again how he had been a salesman for the Manhattan Wanamaker's, until it burned down.

It is a Jewish custom for children to ask the questions, not for parents to question children, so it was that no one asked young Freestone what he wanted from his life.

When he was little he wanted to blow up balloons, rub them on his hair, and stick them around the store. Usually, though, the Freestone balloons were rotted from sitting so long in their cardboard containers. Pictures of sausage-curled girls with bows on their heads large as cherub's wings, with freckles above the nose, ballooning fat cheeks, crocheted collars around their cardboard gingham dresses, became pulpy while the balloons spoiled.

What else did Freestone enjoy? He went through the rocket stage, while his schoolmates were out on the fishing boats with their fathers. Young Freestone would shoot beyond them. One Sunday, during Advent Services, Freestone shot off a rocket on the green before the church, but something was wrong with the take-off mechanism. The rocket prepared energetically off

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with huffing and almost chicken-like flappings, but then fell over limply.

On the Fourth of July, in the middle of the tourist season, Freestone set off a fireworks display in his parking lot. He built up mounds of dirt into a volcano, around a toweling tube, into which he had inserted chemicals. The chemical spewed in blues and blinding whites, and it was an amazing display. It even began to drizzle some after the fireworks, as if the elements had been reached and disturbed. But no one saw it, for the older townspeople were at the American Legion dance hall, and the young ones were at the Opera House, which had a patriotic John Wayne Indian-killing film.

There were a few influences in his life, but tourists from outside came in to buy disrespectfully, getting armsful of faded dresses, World War II khaki woolen army pants, old buttons—but buying them all for the wrong reasons. They did not need them, none of it did they need. Yet Freestone read their bumper stickers, the word license-plates from New Hampshire and Vermont that said GOATS and CRAFT or CLIMB. He read BALLOONS RISE ABOVE IT, but the people of the car had just walked around the store silently and then evaporated.

ONE of the locals whom Freestone enjoyed was Mr. Sales, surveyor. He came into Freestone's for his BVD's and winter longies, a friendly fellow, especially to the islanders, although he was busy surveying land for the Boston folks, who were buying up what was left of Granitesville.

"Get busy," he urged young Freestone. "Marry, have progeny. If the Boston folk buy land, pay taxes, they get the vote. Soon they'll outvote us. Then we'll have a Boston mayor, a Boston surveyor, and a Boston clothier to take this place over."

He would pass the time of day with Freestone senior and his brother, then chat a bit with the young son.

"Learn your friends," said Mr. Sales. "A stranger is not a friend!"

Young Freestone was silent. It was not proper to tell a customer his private affairs, that he had no friends, that, more likely, had among these young lobstermen and sardine factory girls, enemies.

Not so the father.

"What friends?" asked senior Freestone. "He's so popular he sits home seven days a week."

"I've got some friends that'd appeal to you," Mr. Sales told the boy and invited him to his home, past the second large hill on the road out of town, down the dirt road to the right, and onto the cove.

There one Saturday ("Come any day but the Lord's Day," Mr. Sales had said, but he did not mean Freestone's Lord) young Freestone surveyed the cove with Mr. Sales. Mr. Sales had come by for him, for he wanted help in marking out the running feet of his shorefront property.

"Ossie!" suddenly Mr. Sales called, cupping his hands up at an osprey that flew past.

The bird circled, beeping at Mr. Sales.

"Isn't that cunning?" asked Mr. Sales. "I saved him from an eagle once. His eye was red and hanging out, and his wings so tore he couldn't lift himself off the ground. Look now, the eye growed back, the wing covered over. But he remembers me, just won't come into my hands anymore."

Other friends Freestone left, or saw leavings of them. There was the black bowel movement of the foxes who ate berries in the woods.

Mr. Sales said, "I got color film of them folks. They as tame as chickens, come right up to my front door, eat hamburger out of my hand. But the hunting season was extended—fox pelts is bringing more money—and my friends walk right up to the hunters to get shot. Ain't gonna make pets of them no more."

All along the shore Mr. Sales had something to show Freestone. He pointed out the bushes of slightly sour cranberries, or the seaweed that he used as compost for his garden, the seedy huckleberries that he froze and just poured into a pie shell to bake any time of the year, or the long chive-like greens, goose-tongue.

All winter Freestone visited Mr. Sales, bringing his harmonica to play along with Mr. Sales's banjo or listening to Mr. Sales practice his electric organ with buttons that, when pressed, became a drum, a flute, a rock beat—all with Mr. Sales's favorites, "Home Sweet Home," "Yes, We Have No Bananas," "Climb Upon My Knee, Sonny Boy."

During these visits, the young boy would tell Mr. Sales about the depths of his depression.

"Ascend, my boy," said Mr. Sales, who began to play, "Ascend My Lord with Me." "Rise above it," said Mr. Sales, "Don't let them pull you down."

He played, with snare-drum button accompaniment, "I'm pulled down to my grave but I'm lifted to my Lord."

"Soar," said Mr. Sales. This time, with flute accompaniment, he played, "Farewell, Amelia Earhart, you're in a country I never knew. Farewell, Amelia Earheart, you're in heaven so blue."

From material gathered at a surplus store in the county seat, from catalogues and rocket equipment, young Freestone began to build himself a giant balloon, a propane gas, gorgeously expanding flame of a flower of a balloon. He had a gorgeous flower pattern of crimson and yellow petals that bloomed in the air. Freestone tested it on Mr. Sales's land, sending forth first a trial balloon.

"My Lord," said Mr. Sales, "A real trial balloon trial balloon."

When the balloon soared smoothly, Freestone, in the wicker basket, would shoot less propane

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into the balloon, would work the chords and descend not far from his designated spot.

LABOR DAY arrived. The leaves turned early. One strange tree in front of the laundromat was always half-red, half-green by the beginning of September. The County Fair always occurred then, in the county seat. The Freestones went up to the county seat for a kosher butcher shop once in a while and for a small synagogue there shared by both Jews and Unitarians.

"Once enough trading men were up here," Mr. Freestone said, "to support the whole synagogue by themselves. Enough Yankee peddlers and we had this place without having to share. What is shared is spoiled. They get the spoils of our labors."

Young Freestone had told the County Fair officials about his ascension. Mr. Sales was with him as a witness and signed an affidavit that he had seen several genuine ascensions.

It was about the sixth hour, and there was the beginning of darkness over the fair until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened and the buildings and temple of his forefathers were rent in twain.

Mr. Sales helped Freestone blow up the balloon, chasing away children who would poke through the nylon with sticks. He engaged Freestone's former classmates in helping to get the balloon off the ground, to lift as the hot air pumped in. At first the balloon lumbered on the ground, an animal under the coverings, serpentine, lumping, gallumping, then catching a bit and rising and falling, swaying to one side and succumbing.

The young men helped lift while Sales intoned, "Father into thy hands we commend this sport. For this is a righteous man."

Now all the people gathered from sheep-herding and from oxen-pulling, from the 4-H displays, from quilting and canning. The people gathered from the girlie show, leaving the announcer to shout after them: "Come and Watch/ Clutch your Crotch." They left the rides, except for the puffy-faced thirteen-year-old girl standing near the chesty young man at the ferris wheel. And all the people came together and beheld.

Freestone's parents, hearing his name over the loudspeaker, came running from the charity booth which they annually managed, to hear the announcer introducing Mr. Sales, "of great local fame," who would entertain them on the organ. Mr. Sales played and music swelled over the loudspeaker as dusk fell.

Thus did Freestone ascend, carried up even to the heavens.

"Oh my God!" cried Mrs. Freestone.

The sardine girls, still in curlers, prayed most earnestly.

"AND WHERE DID YOU SEE IT? AT YOUR COUNTY FAIR," said the loudspeaker.

Like Prometheus stealing the fire, Freestone flew in the crimson balloon with yellow scallops, his propane torch shooting into the balloon as it sailed over the fairground and past the county seat.

No one on that side of Cadillac Hill saw the flames from the torch that ate at the nylon. A lady, unable to attend the Fair that day, heard him screaming as the balloon caught in the trees, as fire flew up upon impact, heard him screaming as he fell, rushed into the field with her husband, the husband holding a sheet, called the fire department as soon as he was wrapped.

Said the lady, "I heard him screaming while the fire caught his hair."

There were second-degree burns over the face, down the long sideburns, over the thin moustache he was trying to grow, on the hair of his arms, his bit of chest hair.

Mr. Sales visited regularly, making that long ride between his cove and the county seat. The Freestones visited their son every other day, leaving the uncle, not entirely trustworthy, to mind the store. When the roads and the bridge to the mainland iced, Mr. Sales found it too difficult to come. The Freestones went only on Sundays, knowing their son, in the county hospital, was in good hands.

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Jews Under Communism

Paul Lendvai

SINCE 1967, an "anti-Zionist" campaign of almost unprecedented dimensions has been waged by the Communist propaganda apparatus in the Soviet Union and in several countries of Eastern Europe. Although no serious observer would go so far as to equate the present situation with that which obtained at the turn of the century in Czarist Russia, or in Eastern Europe between the two World Wars, it would be equally misguided to overlook the plain fact that in areas of both domestic and of foreign policy the Soviet Union has in the past few years displayed an increasingly hostile attitude to Jews *as Jews*. Nor is the Soviet Union alone in this. Government-inspired anti-Semitism has also become a major theme of political life in Poland (since 1967) and in Czechoslovakia (since 1968). Even Jews in Hungary and Rumania, who have so far remained immune from official persecution, are today living in fear of a new wave of official "anti-Zionism."

In the vast array of Soviet and Polish, Czech and East German literature devoted to the theme, one age-old motif predominates: the motif of a global Jewish conspiracy. Again and again in recent years Soviet and Polish ideologists have come forward with new theoretical formulations designed to adapt this most essential component of "classical" anti-Semitic and Nazi propaganda to "Marxist-Leninist" ends. As Norman Cohn has written in *Warrant for Genocide*, the myth of the Jewish world-conspiracy posits the existence of "a secret Jewish government which, through a worldwide network of camouflaged agencies and organizations, controls political parties and governments, the press and public opinion, banks and economic development. The secret government is supposed to be doing this in pursuance of an age-old plan and with the single aim of achieving Jewish dominion over the entire world; and it is also supposed to be perilously near to achieving this aim." The prime literary embodiment of this doctrine is of course that turn-of-the-century forgery, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, an updated version of which served as the "theoretical" basis for Stalin's last great anti-Semitic witch-hunts: the 1952 trial of Rudolf Slansky, the Secretary General of the Czechoslovak Communist party and of his mainly Jewish colleagues (eleven of the fourteen defendants and eight of the eleven executed victims were "Zionists, cosmopolitans, Jewish bourgeois nationalists"); and the 1953 "Doctors' Plot" in Moscow.

The death of Stalin ended the nightmare to which "Zionists" and "cosmopolitans" from Moscow to East Berlin, from Prague to Budapest, had been exposed in the "Black Years" of 1948-52. One of the first moves of the new regime was to denounce the "Doctors' Plot" as a "fabrication" perpetrated by "despicable adventurers." On the other hand, the official repudiation of the Slansky trial as an invention from start to finish did not come until 1963, and it was not until 1968 that the truth (or at least part of the truth) became known about the degree of direct Soviet responsibility for this, the most horrendous show trial ever staged in an East European country.

It is against this background that we must view the recent reemergence, on a broader scale, of the "Zionist" conspiracy myth. To begin with, some of the fantasies from Stalin's time have been revived, blended with new absurdities, and integrated into a refurbished mythology. Back on the scene are the chief villains of Stalin's last script, the Joint Distribution Committee in particular and international Zionism in general—both described as instruments of espionage in the service of American intelligence. Communist experts on Judaism and Zionism now repeat almost verbatim the source-material prepared for the Slansky trial and the "Doctors' Plot"—a fact that became painfully evident in the vicious attacks leveled by the Soviet press against Professor Eduard Goldstuecker, the noted Czech literary historian who was president of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union during the Prague Spring of 1968. Five weeks after the Soviet invasion, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, the Moscow literary weekly, singled out Goldstuecker as a "particularly dangerous Zionist." A pre-war Jewish Communist, Goldstuecker had been among those tortured and compelled to testify in the Slansky trial, and had been sentenced to life imprisonment. Now the

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Soviet paper charged instead that Goldstuecker had in fact turned witness for the prosecution in order to save his life. Rarely if ever before in Communist history has the victim of a frame-up been accused a second time of the same crime—and by a spokesman of the same power that nearly succeeded in murdering him fifteen years earlier.

Thus, more than fifteen years after the revelation that the "Doctors' Plot" was a "fabrication," a strikingly similar campaign has focused attention on the alleged espionage activities and political and ideological subversion engineered by "Zionism" against "the socialist countries." The erstwhile "murderers in white aprons" have been shown to be innocent doctors, Slansky and his co-defendants have been exonerated, but the rope with which they were hanged is once again being dangled before the Jews of Eastern Europe. In the wake of the Soviet-sponsored "normalization" in Czechoslovakia, Colonel B. Molnar, a leading secret-police official in Prague, took the occasion of an interview to trace the "Zionist excesses" in 1967-68 back to World War II when Goldstuecker and Eugen Loebl (former deputy Foreign Trade Minister, also sentenced to life imprisonment at the Slansky trial) set up "Zionist cells" in London. In all, the web of inventions concocted at the time of Stalin's last plots has been taken over, in spirit and method, in the recent spate of Soviet allegations concerning the "omnipotent international Zionist corporation," the "invisible but huge and mighty empire of financiers and industrialists" created by the blackest forces of world reaction and acting as a "driving force" of imperialist efforts at world domination.

None of this is to say that the millions of Soviet and East European Jews are faced today with wholesale persecution and imprisonment. There is still a world of difference between not being able to get a particular job or an exit visa on the one hand, and deportation to Siberia, or worse, on the other. Nevertheless, the massive and incessant "anti-Zionist" propaganda campaign in recent years has provided a theoretical groundwork that is in some ways potentially more dangerous—because more coherent—than even the pathological fabrications of the Stalin era. The most cursory glance at a few selected quotations from the veritable avalanche of anti-Israel, anti-Jewish, and anti-Zionist literature will suffice to indicate the ominous implications of this latest variant of the myth of the Jewish world conspiracy. What we have here is not, as was the case in the years after Stalin's death, the occasional indictment of an Orthodox believer or a shady speculator with a Jewish-sounding name, or even the indictment of Judaism itself as a "reactionary political force" or Israel as "an aggressive outpost of imperialism." Nor can the current propaganda offensive from Moscow to East Berlin, Warsaw to Prague, be seen as merely an attempt to justify an unpopular and costly foreign policy at home and placate Arab clients abroad. What we have here, rather, is an apparently definitive, officially approved, theoretical doctrine, one that provides "new" historical evidence for the old stereotype of the Jews as agents of a conspiracy for world control, and therefore "new" justification for a policy of active discrimination and harassment.

Of course, the ostensible targets of the new campaign are not "Jews" but "Zionists" and "world Zionism." But as Vilem Hejl, a Czech novelist, aptly put it at the time of the "anti-Zionist" campaign after the invasion of Czechoslovakia: "Jews can be set apart and defined more easily than, for instance, the intellectuals, the opposition, or the deviationists. Neither a janitor nor a mailman can be 100 per cent certain that an attack on the intellectuals is not also in some way aimed at him. The terms 'opposition' or 'extremist forces' are even more oblique and flexible. But every Aryan knows quite definitely that he is not a Zionist." The average Soviet, Polish, or Czech reader of the by now daily diet of "anti-Zionist" literature would have to make an almost superhuman effort to remember that the stereotypes apply only to the nebulous Zionists and the far-away Israelis, not to the Jew who may happen to live next door.

THE potential impact of the campaign may be gauged by the citation of a few characteristic passages from two of the most authoritative works linking Judaism with Israel's "Nazi-like bestiality and racism" and the international Zionist conspiracy. Trofim Kichko, the Ukrainian author already known for his *Judaism Without Embellishment* (1963), states as follows in his latest work, *Judaism and Zionism* (published in 1968 in Kiev with a first printing of 60,000 copies):

> What was there that so attracted the Zionists in the Torah and the Talmud and in the ideology of Judaism? First and foremost the chauvinistic idea of the God-chosenness of the Jewish people, the propaganda of messianism and the idea of ruling over the peoples of the world. . . . Such ideas of Judaism were inculcated into the Jews first by their priests and later by the Rabbis for centuries and are inculcated today by the Zionists, educating the Jews in the spirit of contempt and hatred toward other people. . . . The ideologists of Judaism through the Holy Scriptures teach the observant Jews to hate people of another faith and even destroy them. . . . Having proclaimed as their task the creation of a Jewish State, the Zionists state that Israel should not only revive a Jewish State, but also establish an empire from sea to sea, which should rule the entire world. . . .

Whereas Kichko's writings are couched in what may be called a more "traditional" vein and are primarily distributed in the Ukraine, Yuri Ivan-

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ov's *Beware: Zionism!* has become an all-Union bestseller and the main focus of the anti-Semitic campaign since 1969. Published in 1969 in a first edition of 75,000 copies—a second, enlarged edition of 200,000 copies came out a year later—the book was immediately and very favorably reviewed, obviously on orders from above, in all major newspapers and was extensively serialized in mass-circulation magazines. It officially introduced the new motif of an internationalist Zionist conspiracy linked to Jews everywhere and carrying on subversion against the Soviet bloc. In a key passage, by now frequently quoted as an official definition of Zionism, Ivanov states:

> Modern Zionism is the ideology, the complex system of organizations, and the political practice of the big Jewish bourgeoisie which has merged with the monopolistic circles of the United States and other imperialist powers. The main substance of Zionism is militant chauvinism and anti-Communism. Coming out against the socialist camp, the international Communist and workers' movement, Zionism also fights against the national-liberation movement of the people. . . . The ruling circles of Israel entered the international Zionist concern as junior partners (this was precisely one of the most important conditions of their existence as ruling circles). The Zionist concern itself . . . represents simultaneously one of the largest alliances between capital and a self-styled "Ministry" on a global scale concerned with the affairs of "Jews the world over" as well as a very large international intelligence center and a well-organized service for misinformation and propaganda on an international scale. The main aim of the concern's "departments," all acting under a single management, is profit and enrichment, safeguarding, within the framework of the capitalist system, its power and parasitic prosperity.

WHAT are the distinguishing and, to my mind, most disturbing features of the new Communist "general line"? They are essentially four in number.

First, Israeli and Jewish leaders are no longer described simply as the collaborators of Nazis in the past and of the "ruling circles" of present-day Western Germany. They are now *identified* as Nazis, and Zionism is now *equated* with fascism.

Second, and as a kind of corollary of proposition one, it is regularly held that the victims of Nazi persecution in the past were themselves responsible for the persecution they suffered. According to this argument, it was the Jewish officeholders and "the agency of the international Zionist concern" who were the principal accomplices of the program of genocide, whereas all Poles, Russians, and Ukrainians did their best to save the Jews. As the central organ of the Polish Communist party put it at the height of the anti-Zionist campaign: ". . . a new conspiracy of Zionism and the sworn enemies of Poland unfolded in exchange for the financial support the Federal German Republic gave to Israel—a conspiracy that, irrespective of obvious facts, was designed to saddle the Polish nation in the most glorious chapter of its struggle for existence with responsibility for the crimes of Hitlerism committed in the Polish territories." And in the Soviet Union, according to an authoritative two-part article in *Pravda* (February 18-19, 1971), Zionists had allegedly collaborated in the carrying out of pogroms as long ago as the 1918-21 Civil War, when they had worked closely with Petlyura and Denikin in order to further their plan of stimulating emigration to Palestine. Then came the "dirty alliance of the Hitlerites and the agents of the Zionist concern"; during the war the Soviet army saved the lives of millions of Jews, "yet, paradoxical as it may seem at first glance, it is this the Zionists cannot forgive."

Perhaps even more repugnant than statements like these is the spectacle of Jews themselves publicly assenting to them. In a widely-publicized declaration issued by fifty-one prominent Ukrainian Jews, "Zionists" were made to share the blame for the massacre at Babi Yar: "The tragedy of Babi Yar will forever remain not only a symbol of the cannibalism of the Nazis but also an indelible disgrace to their accomplices and followers—the Zionists." This charge, not the least fantastic aspect of which is the obvious cynicism with which it was advanced, has lately been cited as "authentic evidence" of Zionist criminality in a pamphlet now circulating in, of all places, East Germany.

International Zionism—and this is the *third* feature of the new doctrine, though perhaps the least novel—"represents one of the greatest concentrations of financial capital and one of the greatest international centers of espionage as well as of misinformation and slander." The "cosmopolitan capital" which ranges from the French Lazard bank to the Rockefellers, from the Morgans to Kuhn, Loeb, from West German and Israeli bankers to the Rothschilds, is said to be involved in financing Zionist activities not only against the Arabs, but also against the Soviet Union and "other socialist countries." Enormous quantities of propaganda material have been put out along these lines by the Soviet and Polish, and lately also by the Czech and East German mass media. Variations in style and tone aside, all such articles purport to show that the "Zionists," by exercising control over press, radio, and publishing firms "in almost all capitalist countries," are able to manipulate the policy of the great powers of the West. In their more virulent formulations these writings are almost indistinguishable from those put out in pre-war Germany by Nazi ideologists like Alfred Rosenberg.

Fourth, and finally, by far the most dangerous

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new motif is the frequent assertion that the plots and subversive activities of the "international Zionist corporation" and Israel are directed not only against the Arab states but also, and increasingly, against the Soviet bloc itself. Thus it is now officially claimed that "the Zionist center" played a key role in seeking to overthrow socialism in Czechoslovakia in 1968. "Zionist elements" were also allegedly involved in the 1956 and 1968 upheavals in Poland. And in connection with the Jewish protest movement in the Soviet Union, *Pravda* repeatedly warned this year that "anyone espousing Zionist beliefs automatically becomes an agent of the international Zionist concern and hence an enemy of the Soviet people." Three months later another authoritative article in the same paper, coinciding with the opening of the second Leningrad trial, was wholly devoted to the theme of how international Zionism seeks to gain ideological and political control over "citizens of Jewish origin in the socialist countries" and to induce them to commit crimes against their own countries. The implications are obvious: all Jews (and *only* they) are actually or potentially involved; the corporate Jew is a twin symbol of external danger and internal treason.

IT WOULD be a mistake to conclude that this tissue of ludicrous fantasies and half-truths is merely an exercise in propaganda, designed perhaps to intimidate but not really to coerce. On the contrary, it has furnished theoretical justification for wave upon wave of what Communist spokesmen like to call "administrative measures," ranging from selective arrests, to group trials like the three that have so far opened in Leningrad and Riga, with more to come, to mass persecution. The simple fact is that the Communist-ruled countries have become the center, as Earl Raab has remarked in these pages,* of "the greatest program of organized anti-Semitism since Hitler." What the final consequences of this program will be it is hard to foretell, but it might be helpful, in attempting to assess its full significance, to trace some of its roots in the history of 20th-century Communism. For although anti-Semitism of the Communist variety, as we have seen, has much in common with traditional Jew-hatred of every stripe, it is also in some respects a unique phenomenon. In a very real sense it springs from what may be called an immanent and inevitable conflict between a unique minority group and the operative logic of a single-party system structured along strict ideological lines.

In saying this I do not mean to underestimate the enormous power of popular hostility to Jews, the centuries-old prejudice and hatred inculcated in the minds of Russians and Ukrainians, Lithuanians and Poles, Hungarians and Rumanians alike. The long history of this hostility, which culminated in the profound indifference displayed by the majority of Russians and East Europeans to Hitler's "Final Solution," not to speak of the active assistance given to that program by a minority, is not in need of elaboration here. Nor is it necessary to stress that the persistence of anti-Jewish prejudices in society as a whole has provided, and continues to provide, a basis for the successful perpetration of various forms of governmental anti-Semitism. The main point, however, is that under a totalitarian system there is not necessarily a direct relationship between folk (or emotional) anti-Semitism and the growth of political anti-Semitism. Under the conditions of a single-party system, with a single dogma preached by the party and state, official anti-Semitism or institutional racial discrimination does not arise from the grass-roots level and therefore needs no mass movement in order to succeed.

Thus, it seems to me of secondary importance to ask whether the incidence of political anti-Semitism in Moscow, Warsaw, or elsewhere in the Communist orbit at a particular time is tied to the personal anti-Semitism of individual Communist leaders. There is of course ample evidence that Stalin harbored crude racial prejudices and that Khrushchev himself was hardly free of "normal" anti-Jewish attitudes. Yet it would be a mistake to assume that the personal sentiments of the dictator or of members of the "collective leadership" govern policy toward the Jews, when in fact they merely color it. Even Stalin's last anti-Jewish campaign, the "Doctors' Plot," sprang less from anti-Semitism in the strict traditional sense than from considerations of policy, as a means to an end: the last great purge, as Khrushchev revealed in his secret speech in 1956, of the old members of the Soviet Politburo. While personal or emotional impulses are of some significance (and under Stalin often spelled the difference between life and death for many individuals!), we should keep in mind the old truism that one need not be an anti-Semite in the conventional sense to engage in or to support anti-Semitic behavior. The question is not whether Stalin or Khrushchev, Brezhnev or Gomulka, disliked Jews, but whether they allowed or encouraged or instigated anti-Semitic policies. The troubled history of the Jews under Communism must be viewed in the wider context of general politics, for the fact is that any improvement or deterioration in the status of Jews as citizens has been, and remains, closely tied with the progress or decline of society as a whole, with the rising or ebbing tide of political reforms, even within the framework of the single-party system.

* "The Deadly Innocences of American Jews," December 1970.

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GOING back, then, to the origins of forces that are still at least partially operative in the Communist world, we find one peculiar circumstance: no matter how ambiguous may have been the attitude of many socialists and radicals in Western Europe, and particularly in Russia, toward anti-Semitism in the hundred years following the French Revolution, by the turn of the 20th century both Russian and West European socialists had become implacably hostile, both in theory and in political practice, to what August Bebel once called "the socialism of fools." Of course, the special "Jewish angle" was already important in the early days of Russian Social Democracy because of the very strength of the Jewish Bund, the first mass workers' party in Russia on the eve of the first revolution. The claim of the Bund to exclusive representation of the Yiddish-speaking Jewish workers played an indirect but profound role in the great split at the crucial Second Congress in 1903: when their demands for an autonomous position within the party were rejected, the Bundist delegates walked out, thereby tipping the scales in favor of Lenin's organizational blueprint as against the looser party rules proposed by Martov, and marking the birth of the Bolshevik and Menshevik factions. The issue in any case involved a question of principle and organization; the question of anti-Semitism scarcely entered here, since the motion to reject the Bund demands was tabled and supported only by Jewish delegates, who accounted for about half of the total members present. Lenin himself was certainly free of anti-Semitic attitudes. The point is that on the issue of Zionism, as well as on the issue of Jewish separateness in general, *all* the Jewish revolutionaries, from Martov to Trotsky, from Rosa Luxemburg to Béla Kun, were of one mind, and not only in 1903, but all along: they all opted for assimilation as against Jewish separateness, for universalism as against any kind of particularism. As anti-Semitism was held to be a mere by-product of capitalism, the coming socialist revolution would, in overthrowing the bourgeois system, also uproot anti-Semitism for good. For the Jewish revolutionary—and not only in Russia—the Jewish Question was not an independent issue; Jewish emancipation was inseparable from the universal emancipation of alienated man from the bourgeois order.

This brings us to the much debated issue of the disproportionate Jewish participation in revolutionary movements in general and to the potent myth of the "Judeo-Communist" conspiracy in particular. The fact is that wherever they had a choice, most Jews favored liberal or moderate Social Democratic parties over the Communists. I do not mean to deny the clear-cut susceptibility of "certain segments of the Jewish intelligentsia," in Walter Laqueur's words, "to the party of revolution." But here two distinctions must be made. In reality, the Jews were much more heavily represented among the Mensheviks than among the Bolsheviks—a fact which was duly noted by the young Stalin at the Fifth Congress in 1907. In the underground paper he then edited at Baku, Stalin wrote, "Somebody among the Bolsheviks (I believe Comrade Alexinski) remarked jokingly that since the Mensheviks were a faction of the Jews, and the Bolsheviks of the native Russians, it would be a good thing to have a pogrom in the party." (Even more instructively, this anti-Semitic joke was republished by Stalin in his collected works forty years later!) But on the other hand, as a look at the number of Georgians, Poles, and Latvians in key positions in the early history of Soviet Russia will reveal, Jews were only one of the "Communist-producing social and ethnic groups" in Eastern Europe.*

Yet the fact remains that at an early date Jews were prominent in leadership positions in Soviet Russia and their prominence left an indelible mark on world opinion, and especially on the populations of Eastern Europe, where the spirit of nationalism has remained central to political life. Henceforth, the corporate Jew was identified with international Communism as such, which in turn was seen—and in Eastern Europe with good reason—as a tool of old-fashioned Russian imperialism.

In view of their role not only in Russia but in every East European Communist party except the Yugoslav, the Bulgarian, and the Albanian, the Jews came to be regarded throughout the entire area as the group that profited most from revolutionary upheavals. Coming from an urban group and boasting a higher level of education, Jewish revolutionaries were often able to get to the top faster than their non-Jewish comrades. If we add to this, without trying to define it too precisely, the Jewish spiritual legacy, the facts of history and social psychology, and the fearful environmental pressures that forced assimilated Jews to distinguish themselves in whichever avenues were open to them, the excessive proportion of Jewish activists at the command level at one time or another will come to seem even less surprising, especially when we take into account the generally hostile attitude of the Russian, and later the East European, intelligentsia to Communism.

But if from one point of view the October Revolution appeared in the early days to be the product of a "Judeo-Communist" conspiracy, from another point of view the Revolution seemed to embody the first real breakthrough in the struggle against ethnic discrimination. The presence of Jews (in the sense of per-

* See R. V. Burks, *The Dynamics of Communism in Eastern Europe* (Princeton, 1961).

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sons of Jewish descent) in top positions could be seen, and could be represented, as evidence that the Revolution was in some way particularly favorable to the Jews *as a group*. (Did not Jews, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, at one point even constitute a majority in the ruling Politburo?) As a sign of full Jewish emancipation, great numbers entered the ranks of the state and party bureaucracy at all levels. As late as 1927, Jews occupied over 10 per cent of the civil-service posts in Moscow, a fifth of the offices in the Ukraine, and no fewer than 30 per cent of the posts in Byelorussia. These percentages, about four times greater than the respective Jewish proportions of the total population in these areas, clearly show the absence of any discriminatory quota regulations. Thus the Revolution not only freed Jews from the danger of pogroms (at any rate after the unspeakable sufferings during the Civil War) but also provided them with a ticket of entry to political power.*

It was, however, in this same period that anti-Semitism began to be used as a calculated political device, and by none other than Stalin himself, who in 1925-26 relied on it as a weapon for attacking the inner-party opposition. Cynically and deliberately he exploited the circumstance that the most prominent opponents of the ideal of "Socialism in One Country" were old Bolsheviks of Jewish descent (who incidentally had never felt or displayed the slightest sympathy toward religious or "particularistic" Jews). As Isaac Deutscher tells it, it was then that Trotsky, first in a letter to Bukharin and then a fortnight later at a Politburo meeting, asked the "astonished and indignant" question: ". . . is it true, is it possible that in *our party*, anti-Semitic agitation should be carried on with impunity?" Despite the continued presence of some prominent Jews, above all his loyal henchman Kaganovich, in Stalin's entourage, the pattern of surreptitiously abetting anti-Semitic sentiments was set, and soon became a corollary of the "revolution from above" that came to be increasingly infused with the spirit of Great Russian nationalism.

The strains and tensions of an isolated, poor, and primitive society, staggering under Stalin's brutal collectivization and industrialization campaigns and shaken by successive waves of bloody purges, hit the various segments of Jewry more sharply and more cruelly than any other ethnic or national group in the country. The departure from the traditions of internationalism and the reassertion of crude national arrogance, with a concomitant xenophobia that reached a climax during and after World War II, coincided with the "proletarianization" of the party and state apparatus and the emergence of a new generation of bureaucrats. (It is usually forgotten that the current generation of Soviet officials, who attained positions of power in the 1950's and 1960's, was trained at the height of the Stalin era, in an atmosphere of intense paranoia, suspicion, and chauvinism.) In one of his last interviews Trotsky referred to the technique of scapegoats developed to perfection during this period: "Since 1925, and particularly since 1936, an anti-Semitic demagogy, well camouflaged, unassailable, goes hand in hand with the token trials against inveterate pogromists. An important part of the Jewish petit-bourgeoisie has been absorbed by the powerful apparatus of the state, industry, commerce, cooperatives, etc., primarily in the lower and middle echelons. This fact engenders an anti-Semitic mood and the leadership cunningly attempts to canalize and to direct the discontent with bureaucracy particularly against Jews."

TURNING to Eastern Europe we find ourselves faced with a rather different situation. The equation Jew=Communism=Russia, while corresponding less and less to the situation in Soviet Russia, referred, as I have already noted, to something definitely real in prewar and postwar Eastern Europe. For even though active Communists were only a tiny fraction of the Jewish community of each country—in interwar Poland, for example, there were perhaps five thousand Jewish Communists in a total Jewish population of 3.3 million—they were greatly overrepresented in the party membership at large (accounting in Poland for 26 per cent); moreover, many positions of leadership in the party were conspicuously occupied by Jews, and often by "foreign" Jews at that. Was not the Comintern, the heart and soul of the "Judeo-Bolshevik world plot," heavily staffed not only by Russian but also by Polish and Hungarian, Rumanian and German, Jews? Working as far-flung emissaries of the Comintern, in the Budapest underground, in the Prague parliament, or in a small Galician town, Jewish Communists were seen, in a time of frenzied nationalism, as doubly alien, doubly subversive.

After the War, to make matters worse, the officials in charge of the Soviet takeover in Eastern Europe were themselves often Jews, serving as party leaders and ministers, police chiefs and army generals, in the same countries where their fellow Jews, if not their own families, had only a

* It is nevertheless important to remember that even in the 1920's the majority of Soviet Jews found themselves trapped in what Isaac Deutscher called a "tragic impasse." "Simpleminded Communists often looked upon the Jews as the last surviving element of urban capitalism, while the anti-Communists saw them as influential members of the ruling hierarchy." Social and economic upheavals wiped out the "unproductive" elements among the Jews: middlemen, shopkeepers, peddlers. In the campaign aimed at the destruction of religious and communal life, Jewish functionaries were second to none in their zeal. This story was repeated in Eastern Europe after 1945.

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few years earlier been deported and murdered amid general popular indifference. To the population at large, the Jews appeared to be growing more powerful and conspicuous precisely as their overall numbers diminished radically (from a pre-war community of over five million to a postwar remnant of about 700,000). That within a few years almost half of the survivors had emigrated to Israel did not change this fateful identification of Jews with state power. In Eastern Europe Jewish officeholders were hated with special virulence because they were aliens imposing an alien system on behalf of an alien oppressor.

Years later, when the Jews became expendable thanks to the development of "native" cadres in the various Communist countries, this entire circumstance provided a convenient basis for allegations of a deliberate Jewish plot to usurp power. During the 1968 "anti-Zionist" campaign in Poland, for example, the *numerus clausus* was defended by Andrzes Werblan, the head of the party's Education and Science Department, in these words: "Internal cosmopolitanism has provided a basis for the false accusation of anti-Semitism against those comrades who understood that no society can tolerate the excessive participation of a national minority in the elite of power, particularly in defense, security, propaganda, and diplomacy. . . . Only absolute thoughtlessness and clique solidarity of a nationalistic origin can explain the rapid advance of persons from the Jewish petit-bourgeoisie, traditionally unconnected with Communism and frequently subject to Zionist influence." In this racist manifesto, prepared by a ranking party ideologist, both the failures of the pre-war Communist party and the postwar purges were practically ascribed to Jewish "group solidarity" and "cosmopolitanism," since "particularly responsible positions" in key sectors were occupied by Jews who were ethnically incapable of being good Communists and good Poles.

The motif of a "Zionist-imperialist" conspiracy first appeared at the Rajk trial in Budapest in September 1949—that is, more than three years before the Slansky trial and the "Doctors' Plot." The arrest of Rudolf Slansky in Prague in the autumn of 1951, the fall from grace of Anna Pauker in Bucharest in May 1952, and the subsequent trial of Slansky served notice of Stalin's readiness to dispense with his Jewish tools in the satellite countries. Stalin's "court Jews" were caught in the crossfire between pre-existing popular hatred and the ominous policy change in Moscow. Some, like Rakosi in Hungary, tried to ward off the danger by themselves initiating a vicious purge of their Jewish subordinates. But, as always, it was the ordinary Jews—the artisans and doctors, the bookkeepers and engineers—who paid the price for the glamorous careers of the "court Jews." Only the death of Stalin saved the Jews from the worst.

Since Stalin's death, the transition throughout Eastern Europe from total Soviet domination to growing internal autonomy and national affirmation has been accompanied by a process of differentiation with regard to the Jews as well. It is no longer Soviet policy but internal factors that influence the status of the Jews in a given country. Thus a combination of special circumstances in Hungary (the absence of factional in-fighting and a generally relaxed atmosphere) and in Rumania (a self-assertive foreign policy and the maintenance of diplomatic relations with Israel) created a relative degree of security for the respective Jewish communities at the very time that Jews became targets of official persecution in Poland and Czechoslovakia.

But if we examine the fundamentals of *Soviet* policy toward the Jews since Stalin's death, we see only differences of degree, not of substance. True, his last great purge was stopped before it could envelop the entire Jewish community, but no explicit condemnation of Stalin's "errors" with specific regard to the Jews has ever appeared. Apart from minor concessions to public opinion abroad, and in contrast to all other countries of the Soviet bloc (even including Poland), the Soviet Union has consistently suppressed Jewish cultural and educational institutions. Even during the more liberal Khrushchev era there was no real let-up in the imposition of restrictive quotas in higher education and the virtually total exclusion of Jews from the party apparatus, diplomatic service, and other "sensitive" posts. The very prominence of Jews in the artistic, literary, and scientific worlds, so often cited by Soviet spokesmen, dramatically points up their almost total absence from leadership positions. In 1939 Jews constituted almost 11 per cent of the party's Central Committee; in 1952 this figure had dropped to 3 per cent and in 1961 to a mere 0.3 per cent. Among the 241 full and 155 candidate members of the current Central Committee, only one person is a Jew, V. E. Dymshitz; Dymshitz is also one of the nine Deputy Premiers and is therefore often displayed at press conferences as evidence for the absence of anti-Jewish discrimination. In fact, however, the top political leadership is now *judenrein*.

THE thrust of discriminatory practices directed against Jews in the Soviet Union is basically twofold. The regime attempts to suppress Jews as a group (by refusing to sanction the establishment or maintenance of cultural facilities allowed to all other nationalities, including even such non-territorial groups as the Germans) while at the same time it discriminates against them as individuals (official insistence on Jewish identity through the device of the internal

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passport, restrictive quotas, etc.). There is a fundamental contradiction in Soviet policy toward the Jews as a nationality, part of the unresolved dualism of Soviet nationality policy in general, which claims to be promoting individual national cultures but also to be forging an "all-Soviet" nationality, itself of course merely a euphemism for the fusion of national cultures with the Great Russian. But the contradictory tendencies of integration and rejection, assimilation and discrimination, that operate in Soviet society at large have hit the Jews more cruelly than any other religious or national group, preventing them from living either as Jews or as non-Jews.

The treatment of Jews as a special case has all along had the dual effect of at once suppressing and stimulating a sense of Jewish identity. There is no doubt, however, that the years since 1967 have witnessed a profound resurgence of ethnic solidarity (though not necessarily of religious sentiment) and an unprecedented defiance of the authorities among a large number of Soviet Jewish youth. Unfortunately, it is difficult to share in the expectation that the current Jewish awakening within the Soviet Union will combine with pressures from abroad to bring about a substantial improvement in the position of the Soviet Jew—possibly even opening the way for large-scale emigration to Israel. Even in the unlikely event of a solution to the Middle East problem in the foreseeable future, it is unrealistic to suppose that Soviet leaders will agree to open the gates to any massive Jewish exodus. To do so would mean first of all to dispense with the services of large numbers of Jewish experts in the technological and scientific fields whom the USSR can ill afford to lose. More important, it would mean granting a privilege to the Jews that is denied to all other Soviet citizens, thereby creating an extremely dangerous precedent. Nor can we realistically expect that Jews will be permitted to live out their new sense of ethnic or communal solidarity in the Soviet Union. They will go on being treated as a special case and they will go on suffering discrimination and harassment.

Clearly it is the intention of the Soviet regime to wield the political instrument of anti-Semitism with calculated moderation rather than, as did Stalin, with uncontrolled fury. But the danger is that the fantasies produced by systematic lying may under certain circumstances become a political force that can sweep up a divided leadership worn out by constant crisis. The 1968 witch-hunt in Poland proved beyond a doubt the political effectiveness of anti-Semitism in manipulating factional battles for power. And in Czechoslovakia we are still witnessing the effects of a Moscow-sponsored operation to channel hatred for Soviet domination into hatred for Jews. Faced with colonial or internal political-social crises that demand symbolic scapegoats, the besieged and embattled men in the Kremlin invariably fasten upon the traditional suspect: the Jews. The conjunction of old and "new" anti-Semitism in moments of acute crisis transforms the officially nonexistent Jewish problem into the single most important catalyst for all the strains and tensions within the system. This is the recurrent pattern and the "lesson" of Communist history for the Jews, no matter what they themselves may or may not have done throughout that history and no matter where they may now happen to live within the Soviet sphere of influence.

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Of Fish and People

Milton Himmelfarb

. . . Justice William O. Douglas of the Supreme Court . . . address[ed] himself to one of his favorite topics, conservation. "I am on the side of the fish now and against people," he said.
—New York *Times*, August 17, 1971

For a Justice of the United States Supreme Court there is the side of people and there is the side of fish (or animals, or birds), and to be on one side is to be against the other. He is on the side of the fish. "The Puritan," in Macaulay's backhanded compliment, "hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators." (For their part the Cavaliers, no bluenose spoilsports, loved bear-baiting.) Is the Justice against people because he is on the side of the fish, or is he on the side of the fish because he is against people? "We the Fish of the United States, in order to . . . establish justice . . . do ordain and establish this Constitution. . . . The judicial power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme Court. . . ." This is sometimes called the new humanism.

Last spring I had a conversation with a fine young man, a college senior, a progressive Catholic. He told me the unforgivable offense of his church: in the Middle Ages it cut down the pagans' sacred trees. I was surprised, because when he had begun to talk of the Middle Ages I was expecting remorse about Charlemagne's proselytizing massacre of Widukind's Saxons, or about the Albigensians, or about the Jews. I told him that as a Jew I was willing to have Judaism assume the responsibility for those trees. It was from the Jewish Bible Christianity had received the command to cut down pagan groves, where human victims were sacrificed. Well, he answered, maybe so; but still, he went on, is killing a person as final as cutting down a tree? There are more people in Europe now than there were in the Middle Ages, but fewer trees.

In the last century Flaubert kept, and transformed into art, a *sottisier*—a collection of pretentious sillinesses. Now a collector need only clip the New York *Times*. One thing he would soon discover is that the Judeo-Christian tradition has seen better days. (About the thing itself, the Judeo-Christian tradition, I am possessed by the spirit of contradiction. Affirm it, and I want to deny it. Deny it, and I want to affirm it.)

• Letter to the editor, *Times*, August 20, 1971:

> . . . Mrs. [X] assures us that the "Friends of the Central Park Zoo" are making it a "more rewarding place for its several million visitors." It is this blind and blinding anthropocentrism, so deeply embedded in the Christian-Judaic ethic, which is destroying the beauty of this world. How about making Central Park Zoo a "more rewarding place" for its caged animals? . . .

• Dispatch, Rome, September 5:

> "No false Judeo-Christian shame!" proclaimed posters displayed by members of the Italian Naturist League recently in demonstrations against alleged harassment of nudists by the police and others. . . .

The Italian nudists' slogan is intriguing—less because their repudiation of false Judeo-Christian shame might be taken to imply their adherence to true pagan shamelessness, than because the European "Judeo-Christian" is different from the American. In the United States, when the lady who wrote that letter to the editor said "Christian-Judaic" she meant essentially what an Italian would mean by "Christian"—the nation's religious tradition, its ancient system of ethical thought and precept. In Italy, "Judeo" attached to "Christian" signals that an old propaganda device is being used. "Judaizing" is a favorite term of abuse in the history of Christian controversy. Catholics called the Reformers Judaizers, and quarreling Reformers called each other Judaizers. Only twenty or twenty-five years ago the Greek government and church, persecuting Jehovah's Witnesses, called them Judaizers.

But the accusation of Judaizing has been too useful for it to remain Christian property. Ex-Christian *philosophes* desirous of attacking Christianity, but not daring to do so explicitly, could do so implicitly, and safely, by attacking the contemptible Jews and their contemptible Judaism. Mocking the name Habakkuk, Voltaire could mock the Christianity whose scriptures included prophecy by a Jew bearing that ridiculous name. Leo Strauss has shown that some of

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Spinoza's attack on Judaism is also, or perhaps even primarily, a concealed attack on Christianity.

For the *philosophes* this was good clean philosophical fun. But some of it was also anti-Semitic. In Germany liberal Protestant theologians wanted to purify Christianity of its Jewish dross, and some of them cooperated with Hitler in his German Church. There is no reason to suppose that those Italian nudists are anti-Semitic. Still, they knew what they were doing when they put their hands to that proved instrument, devaluation by a Jewish label.

IF you say that "the Christian-Judaic ethic" is the enemy of animals, presumably you think some other tradition is better. In the West, what other tradition is there? Sir Henry Maine said that "except for the blind forces of Nature, nothing moves in this world which is not Greek in origin." (The apocryphal Oxford don had a similar thought: "Whenever I am struck by a novel idea, I go to my bookshelves to see how the Greeks expressed it.") What is the Greek tradition or teaching about animals? If directness and largeness of vision, and the elevation of nature over convention, are the great Greek virtues, then Aristotle is the greatest Greek; and about nature and animals and men, Aristotle says (Politics 1256b): ". . . nature has made all the animals for the sake of men." To which he immediately adds that war and hunting are alike by nature. Hunting is justly used against animals. War is used against those sorts of men who, though meant by nature to be slaves, resist enslavement—"so that by nature such war is just."

"Nature," "by nature," "natural," "naturally," "according to nature," "against nature," are key words in Aristotle. The Bible has no word for "nature"—which may be why the Bible knows nothing of men who are slaves by nature. Accepting slavery, the Bible nevertheless commands (Deuteronomy 23:16-17):

> You shall not hand over to his master a slave who escapes to you from his master. He shall live with you, in your midst, in any place that he chooses, in one of your towns, as he prefers; you shall not mistreat him.

"Nature has made all the animals for the sake of men" is Greek, by the greatest Greek. Yet it is "the Christian-Judaic ethic" that is now condemned for anthropocentrism.

Since Maine's time we have become more aware and inclusive of non-Western traditions. Do the Chinese and Indian cultures encourage kindness to animals? If anthropocentrism is the enemy, the Chinese tradition is as anthropocentric as can be. And though the Hindus do not kill cows, Indian cows are not greatly to be envied. ("Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive/Officiously to keep alive.") The Judeo-Christian tradition is anthropocentric only when an opponent wants to make a point. More than the Judeo-Christian tradition is anthropocentric, it is theocentric. Or perhaps (like an ellipse) it is dually -centric: theo- and anthropo-.

There is still another tradition—modernity, "the tradition of the new." The difference between the old, Judeo-Christian tradition and the new, modern tradition is a central theme in an immortal American book, *Moby Dick*.

What is the essential crime now being alleged against us? Hubris. We have set ourselves over and against nature. We have neither piety toward the cosmos nor pity toward the other species with whom we share life. The impious and blasphemous will befoul, pillage, and destroy a sanctum. In our impiety toward nature we blasphemously deny the sanctity of our world and of the various kinds of life in it. We befoul the world as we pillage and destroy it.

Moby Dick is about, among other things, the hubris of moderns. Detached from family and village, separated from the Judeo-Christian tradition, the modern makes his own law. He will not obey the law of another (or Another). Enrage him, and so far from acquiescing in being part of the universe, the modern would rather attempt to swallow up the universe within himself. The somewhat literary name for the modernity represented in *Moby Dick* by Captain Ahab is Faustianism. Faustian man desecrates and ravages the earth and the fullness thereof. (This is written for the benefit of the young and their forgetful elders. Only a few years ago, before the current indignation about the Judeo-Christian tradition, Faustian man was common coin, worn by use.)

The "I" of *Moby Dick* is Ishmael, and he too is modern, detached, like Ahab, from tradition and traditional ties. An outsider and a spectator, Ishmael nevertheless has his way of swallowing the universe—vicariously, by watching others attempt it, by role-playing in the mind. At the other end of the ship's hierarchy from Captain Ahab, differing from him in character, he understands him better than anyone else does. Partly that is because Ishmael has an understanding imagination; but it is also because he recognizes in himself the seed, the potentiality, of the obsession that in Ahab is full-blown. In his judgment of Ahab, Ishmael makes the modern choice. He gives primacy to the aesthetic over the moral. In Ishmael's eyes Ahab has the elemental force and the beauty, beyond good and evil, of the White Whale himself, or of those awesome storms at sea.

The two countrymen of Ahab and Ishmael in sharpest contrast to them are Father Mapple and Starbuck, the Quaker from Nantucket. Father Mapple reveals that by force of will he has turned from a life at sea that, given his character, could have made of him too a kind of Ahab. He has compelled himself to submit to God. He is

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the Jonah both of the Book and of his own sermon, first rebelling against God's claim on him and then embracing it.

In Starbuck character and tradition are of a piece. He is active not passive; but he is measured, moderate. Courageous, he despises foolhardiness. Engaged in whaling—and therefore believing that humanity's right to use other creatures extends even to killing them—he is resolute against more killing than is strictly necessary. He would be disgusted by bullfighting; he would hunt for food, but not for sport. He is integrally opposed to Ahab's mad enterprise. He will not be caught up in the excitement, he will not admire aesthetically what he loathes morally and opposes prudentially.

Standing within the Judeo-Christian tradition, Father Mapple and Starbuck are not of those who make war on God's creation. They are not Faustian. For aggression against the cosmos is a Faustian crime—in the case of Ahab a crime so much grander than the average man's petty larcenies that in us half-hearted Faustians it arouses more admiration than horror.

Since Faustianism is a rebellious overthrow of the Judeo-Christian tradition, why is the Judeo-Christian tradition blamed for the Faustian crime? It is no good to say that Faustianism is a Judeo-Christian heresy, and therefore of Judeo-Christian origin. In that sense, practically everything in the West which is not Judeo-Christian is a Judeo-Christian heresy. The Judeo-Christian tradition cannot be invoked to explain everything. What explains everything explains nothing.

In Starbuck a Jew can recognize a character almost ideally that of a proper Jewish householder. We could hope many Jews to be like him, without at the same time having to hope for a transvaluation of Jewish values. (We would only have to hope for overcoming the habits implanted in us by *galut*.)

THE Jewishness of the Christian Starbuck argues for a Judeo-Christian tradition. But of course that does not make Judaism's tradition(s) identical with Christianity's. Discussing the Jewish and Christian doctrines and law concerning animals, Jewish apologists say that Paul has much to answer for. They point to I Corinthians 9: 9-10:

> In the law of Moses it is written: "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain." Does God care about oxen? Or is He not rather referring entirely to us? Of course that was written for our sake—so that the ploughman shall plough in hope, and the thresher shall thresh in the hope of getting his share.

The Jewish apologists say that this teaching of Paul's is responsible for later Christian teachings that did nothing to mitigate, and actually encouraged, cruelty to animals.

By contrast, our apologists refer us to that part of the "law of Moses" from which Paul quotes, Deuteronomy 25: 1-4:

> When there is a dispute between men and they go to law, and are judged, and the innocent man is declared innocent and the guilty man guilty; if the guilty man deserves to be lashed, the judge shall have him lie down and shall have him lashed by number, in his own presence, proportionately to his guilt. He may be given forty lashes, no more; lest, if your brother is lashed more than that, excessively, he be degraded before your eyes. *You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain.*

The Jewish apologists note that in Judaism, unlike Christianity, the law against muzzling the ox has not been "spiritualized" to the ox's hurt. It remains actual, concrete law. Our apologists could also note that well into the 19th century the navies of Christendom punished enlisted and impressed men not with the biblical maximum of forty lashes—which the Rabbis had reduced to 39, to avert the possible sin of 41 by mistake, and the ensuing, more grievous sin of degrading our brother in our eyes—but with a hundred, five hundred, even a thousand lashes. Like the ox, those sailors too would have preferred a little more of carnal Jewish law and a little less of spiritual Christian love.

The law against muzzling the ox follows immediately upon the law against degrading our brother the criminal, to teach that God cares both about man and about beast. "Of man and beast Thou art protector, LORD" (Psalm 36: 7).

All this is well enough, but in fact it is hard to say anything confident about the relation between doctrine and life, between document and deed. In Jewish law the prohibition (in Deuteronomy 20: 19-20) against besiegers destroying fruit trees was expanded by the Rabbis to include all wanton destruction. Recent articles about "Judaism and the environment" have discussed it; but how did that affect flesh-and-blood Jews? Sometimes doctrines and documents count for a great deal, and sometimes they don't.

John Maynard Keynes said that the businessman or man of affairs may pride himself on being a no-nonsense, practical sort who has no truck with theories; yet without knowing it, he is a slave to the theory of some long-dead scribbler. But have all long-dead scribblers their disciples, knowing or unknowing?

Documents can lie ignored for centuries, and then be recalled to use. The Patristic anti-Jewish teachings and decrees of late antiquity had little influence on such Christian rulers in the early Middle Ages as Charlemagne. In the later Middle Ages, when European society took a new anti-Jewish turn, those teachings and decrees had an influence. That is, the anti-Jewish turn preceded the resuscitation of dead letters. But if those

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ancient anti-Jewish doctrines and laws had not been available for revival, the Jews of the later Middle Ages, and their descendants, might have suffered less.

IN ASKING ourselves what influence Bible and rabbinical literature actually had on Jews, we might therefore do well to start from the Jews rather than from Bible and rabbinical literature. Let us imagine a "typical" Jewish community, as it was before the irruptions of modernity shattered it—in the Ukraine, say, a hundred years or more ago. What were those Jews like in their relation to nature and to the animal kingdom?

First off it must be said that though most of them lived not in cities but in villages, they had nothing like their peasant neighbors' closeness to nature. Maurice Samuel has shown us the striking poverty of Yiddish in names for the plants and the animate beings of the very earth on which its speakers stood, in contrast to the richness of their neighbors' languages. (A suggested sociolinguistic research project: compare, for poverty or richness, the flora-and-fauna vocabulary of the Sephardim's Ladino and of 15th-century Spanish, from which it derives, as well as of the non-Jewish languages spoken in what used to be the Ladino area: Turkish, Bulgarian, Serbo-Croatian, Greek.) The Jews' distance from nature, as reflected in their very language, was an effect less of Judaism than of *galut*.

Not all Jews were entirely removed from nature and the animal kingdom, or equally removed. There were, for instance, the Jewish wagoners, the *balegoles*. Was a Jewish wagoner, who as a Jew was indeed farther removed from nature and the feeling for nature than the Gentile wagoner in the same village, likely in consequence to treat his horse worse than the Gentile did? I doubt it. Geographically, sensitivity about cruelty to animals did not flourish in Eastern (and Southern) Europe. Socially, it did not flourish among the peasantry. The probability is that the Jewish wagoner treated his animal better than the Gentile one.

If so, in part that must have been because Jewish culture and society encouraged kindness to animals and discouraged cruelty, and this affected even the lowly *balegole*. The learned elite, whether those communal officials called rabbis or their yeshivah-mates who earned their livings differently, were only a small part of Jewish society, but they set the tone. They needed none of the aids that the technology of modern scholarship has produced to take the place of old-fashioned erudition. Learned Jews had neither Bible concordance nor Gross's *Otsar Ha-aggadah*, they simply knew Bible and rabbinical literature—including what is said in the Talmud about these verses from Deuteronomy (22:6-7):

> If you happen on a bird's nest along the way, on any tree or on the ground, with fledglings or eggs in it and the mother bird sitting on the fledglings or the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young. You must send the mother away, and then you may take the young; so that you may fare well and have long life.

As it happens, although about these verses the elite, as ever, knew more than the somewhat less learned—the Jewish solid citizens—they did not know incomparably more. The Jewish solid citizen may not have had much Talmud, but he had his Pentateuch. This he knew well, because the more any part of Jewish sacred literature is used liturgically, the better the Jews knew (and know) it. In the synagogue the Pentateuch is read from beginning to end every year. Before hearing a section of the Pentateuch read publicly, a Jew studied it at home, year after year. The solid-citizen Jew knew Pentateuch far better than Prophets, because Prophets are less liturgical. Of Prophets he knew above all the *haftarot*, the extracts that follow the Sabbath and holy-day readings of the Pentateuch. Because the entire Psalter was liturgical, Jews knew Psalms well; but some psalms they knew better than the rest—for instance, the 145th, which a Jew who prays says three times a day.

So not merely the elite but all Jewish men who were not actually ignorant knew what the Rabbis of the Talmud had said about Deuteronomy 22: 6-7 (concerning the mother bird), because what the Rabbis had said about it is reported by the commentators—Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Nahmanides, etc.—whose commentaries surround the Bible text in the standard Jewish editions. There was no such thing as studying Pentateuch without Rashi, and many consulted the other commentators also. From the commentaries the ordinary Jew knew how important, in the tradition, is the identity of reward—long life and faring well—for tenderness toward a mother bird and for honoring father and mother, though honoring father and mother is of the Ten Commandments: in Exodus, "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may have long life. . ."; in Deuteronomy, "Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God commands you, so that you may have long life and that you may fare well. . . ."* It need not be added that the ordinary Jew knew the Ten Commandments enjoin Sabbath rest for "your ox and your ass" (in Exodus) and "your animal" (in Deuteronomy).

From the commentaries he knew, further, that the Rabbis had linked the command about the

*But suppose, the Rabbis asked in the Talmud, that coming down from a tree, after he has obeyed the command of sending the mother bird away, a young man falls, breaks his neck, and dies. How do you reconcile that with the long life promised for obedience to the command? The answer, of course, is that the long life we are promised is the eternal life of the world to come.

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mother bird to other commands, about other animals: "You shall not on the same day slaughter an ox, or a sheep, together with its young" (Leviticus 22:28); "If you see the ass of one who hates you lying under its burden, though you would prefer not to raise it, you must raise it with him" (Exodus 23: 5); "You are not allowed to see your brother's ass or ox fallen by the wayside and ignore them; you must raise them with him" (Deuteronomy 22: 4).

In Nahmanides' discussion of the commandment concerning the mother bird, they learned about his respectful dissent from Maimonides, whom he quotes. Maimonides teaches that the commandment was intended for the bird's good, because while animals lack human speech and intellect, they have feelings like those of human beings, and it would be needlessly painful to the mother bird (besides being forbidden cruelty in a human being) to add to the mother's loss of her young the hurt of seeing it happen before her eyes. Nahmanides thinks that the command is intended to benefit not birds but us who obey, by training us away from cruelty. (In general, Nahmanides likes to stress the principle, formulated in the Talmud, that the purpose of God's commands is to refine us of our impurities.) He cites yet another reason for the command about the mother and the eggs or fledglings: it teaches us that while we are permitted to use animals, even by slaughtering them for our food, we are forbidden to destroy a species.

All this, and more, was available not only to the learned but also to every Jew who could read the Pentateuch with its commentaries.

Then there were the law codes, of which the content was known to all law-abiding Jews. It is not pious advice but codified, binding Jewish law (from Berakhot, in the Talmud) that "a man is forbidden to eat before he feeds his animal," and (from Bava Metsi'a) that "a Jew must care for a Gentile's animal as for a Jew's." How widely known a more technical legal point was, I am unsure: "The prohibition of cruelty to animals is [not rabbinical but] biblical" (in Bava Metsi'a and Shabbat): a biblical command is higher, more unassailable than a rabbinical law; as the Constitution has more force than a statute.

Nor does this story about Rabbi—i.e., *the* Rabbi, R. Judah ha-Nasi—(again in Bava Metsi'a) seem to have been a monopoly of the learned:

> A calf that was being led to slaughter ran and hid his head under the edge of Rabbi's cloak, and cried. Said he to the calf, "Go. That is what you were created for." Then it was said in heaven, "Because he was not merciful, let sufferings come upon him." . . . Once Rabbi's maidservant was sweeping in the house. Some young weasels [*sic*] were lying there and she was about to sweep them away when Rabbi said, "Leave them alone. It is written (Ps. 145: 9), '[The LORD is good to all, and] His mercy is over all His creatures.'" Then it was said in heaven, "Because he was merciful, we shall have mercy on him."

The Jews' exile from nature was not inherent, but was an aspect of the more encompassing Exile, *galut*. Again the liturgy can testify, copiously. For instance, every Sabbath afternoon from Sukkot to Passover the 104th Psalm and the Songs of Ascent (or of Pilgrimage), Psalms 120-134, are read. The 104th Psalm, a lovely, noble poem about nature, was particularly admired by the earlier German romantics. As to the charge of destructive anthropocentrism against the Judeo-Christian tradition, we have seen that if there is aggression against nature, it is by Faustian man. The most concentrated expression of the spirit at the opposite extreme from Faustianism that I know of is one of those Songs of Ascent—the 131st Psalm, of three verses. In fact, it is entirely too anti-Faustian. (Psalm 131: 2 is one of two verses in the Bible [the other being Isaiah 66:13] where God, who is ordinarily likened to a father, is instead likened to a mother; except that in Isaiah the image is of a man comforted by his mother, while in the 131st Psalm "I" says of himself that he is like a weanling child at his mother's breast.)

THE time has come to return from the Bible's birds and oxen to Justice Douglas's fish. Should we be concerned about the danger to fish? Yes. About polluted water and air? Yes. Should we be against people? No.

When public discourse is conducted in shrieks, voices at a lower decibel level go unheard. With water and air, both the analysis of what is wrong and the treatment for righting the wrong are not at all new. For many years economists have been distinguishing between private cost and social cost. In the old textbooks, air was the example of a free good. No one will be as careful with a free good as with a costly one. If abusing air and water is not free but has to be paid for, we shall be as unwasteful of them as of anything else that has to be paid for.

Is the question of water and air about prudence, about the normal, quotidian more and less? Or is it a question about the End of the World? There have always been temperaments that like to believe in the imminent End of the World. Now our culture itself likes End-of-the-World thought, or emotion; and dislikes people.

Though we are—or say we are—for the masses, we have a distaste for those who make up the masses. Residents of suburban shore towns we call selfish and bigoted when they try to close their beaches to the busloads from the city; but we, who used to have the national parks pretty much to ourselves, are only being high-minded lovers and protectors of nature when we shudder

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at those crowds of slobs who have been descending upon us lately in their cars, with their noise and litter. Just so, isn't it revolting, what all those tourists are doing to Venice? When *we* go to Venice, we are not tourists. We are visitors, or travelers—or researchers.

Rather more serious is the possibility that somehow, as by a kind of unarticulated, subterranean communication—a Marxoid class consciousness?—the philosophers have decided that the time has finally arrived for them to become, as rightfully they should be, kings.

To cry crisis can have one of three functions, of which the first is praiseworthy, the second tolerable, and the third sinister. The first function of crying crisis is to tell people about a real crisis. The second is to get one's self heard about something that, while not a real crisis, does need consideration and remedy; but since people pay attention to nothing but exaggeration—if that—one exaggerates. The third function of crying crisis is to declare a state of emergency.

A state of emergency requires emergency measures: *inter arma silent leges*. If—regretfully, of course—I decide that the United States should introduce compulsory sterilization, I declare that the country is in a state of emergency, that it is in danger of sinking beneath the weight of its population. A country in a state of emergency cannot afford democratic luxuries, it needs a strong king. Since it is knowledge that moves the world today, only the philosopher—the scholar, the expert—is fit to be king.

If salesmen were to declare a state of emergency that required salesmen as kings, we would be suspicious. If the Attorney General asked for a suspension of civil liberties so that, in the Roman formula, the state should not sustain detriment, we would put the burden of proof on him. When scholars and experts declare a state of emergency that requires them as kings, should they be exempt from our suspicion and from the burden of proof?

The scholar judged by his colleagues to be the most influential psychologist in the United States titles his latest book *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*. To those who will shirk their duty and not read the book he speaks through the *Times* (September 3, 1971):

> "Traditional concepts of individual freedom and dignity have made an immeasurable contribution, but they've served their purpose," the rangy, cheerful, 67-year-old Harvard university professor asserted. . . .

We could wish him a bit less cheerful.

An address to the American Psychological Association by its president (*Times*, September 4) calls for "the creation of new drugs that could routinely be given to people, especially leaders holding great power, to subdue hostility and aggression, and, therefore, allow more humane and intelligent behavior to emerge." People like us, enlightened people, understand that addiction to drugs is just an extension of the public's addiction to all kinds of chemicals, from aspirin to tranquilizers. We understand that this general addiction is only what can be expected of a society that has put its faith in technology: a drug fix is a form of chemical fix, which is a form of "technological fix." But when it comes to declaring a state of emergency, and deciding what we shall do when we are in power, our disdain for fixes vanishes. Then we want people to have the right fix. We want them to take the right chemicals, the chemicals we will give them.

Who will administer the behavioral training to make the race healthy and happy, after it has been helped to see through the illusion of freedom and dignity? Who will perfect the anti-hostility fix, and administer it? Who but the philosophers—the scholars and experts? Not only are they alone skilled enough, but also they are very moral. We can safely give them the unchecked power they will need—for in a state of emergency, and especially after we have advanced beyond freedom and dignity, there will be no excuse for the obstruction of uninformed blather, whether by Congressmen or by journalists. If you can't trust philosopher-kings, whom can you trust?

The *philosophes* thought they could use benevolent despots to carry out the philosophical program: Voltaire and Diderot on the one hand, Frederick of Prussia and Catherine of Russia (both of them, for some reason, called Great) on the other. It soon became questionable whether the benevolent despots were benevolent, but it remained unquestionable that they were despots. The *philosophes*' attempt failed. They did not become the power behind the throne.

Now some descendants of the *philosophes*, doubtless more unconsciously than consciously, appear to feel they need no longer settle for second best. Plato's ambition may be attainable at last. The philosophers will be kings in their own right, not standing behind thrones but sitting on them. The philosophers' despotism will necessarily, by definition, be benevolent.

A Jewish question-and-answer: *Q*: In what way does a tailor resemble a human being? *A*: A human being works, and works, and works, and then he dies. And that is how it is with a tailor.

Q: In what way does a philosopher-scholar-expert-intellectual resemble a human being? *A*: A human being wants to be a despot, and he is sure he will be a benevolent one. And that is how it is with a philosopher.

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Forster as Homosexual

Cynthia Ozick

Possibly the most famous sentence in Forster's fiction is the one that comes out of the blue at the start of Chapter Five of *The Longest Journey*: "Gerald died that afternoon." The sentence is there with no preparation whatever—no novelistic "plant," no hidden tracks laid out in advance. Just before the turning of the page we have seen Gerald resplendent in his sexual prime, "with the figure of a Greek athlete and the face of an English one," a football player of no special distinction but the fact of his glorious aliveness. Then, without warning, he is "broken up."

The suddenness of Gerald's death has been commented on almost too often by Forster seminarians; it is, after all, a slap in the reader's face, and must be accounted for. Asked about it in a 1952 interview (it was then forty-five years since the book had first appeared), Forster would only say, "It had to be passed by." An insulting answer. Forster is a gentleman who never insults unintentionally; he also intends to shock, and he never shocks inadvertently. Shock is the nearest he can come to religious truths. If you are reading a Forster story about a vigorous young man and happen, in the most natural way, to forget for just that moment how Death lies in ambush for all of us, Forster will rub your nose in reminders. How dare you forget that Death is by, how dare you forget Significance? Like those medieval monks who kept a skull on their desks, Forster believes in the instructiveness, the salubriousness, of shock. He believes that what is really important comes to us as a shock. And like nature (or like religion bereft of consolation), he withholds, he is unpredictable, he springs, so as to facilitate the shock.

That is in the fiction. His own life seemed not like that. He endured the mildest of bachelor lives, with, seen from the outside, no cataclysms. He was happiest (as adolescents say today, he "found himself") as a Cambridge undergraduate, he touched tenuously on Bloomsbury, he saw Egypt and India (traveling always, whether he intended it or not, as an agent of Empire), and when his mother died returned to Cambridge to live out his days among the undergraduates of King's. He wrote what is called a "civilized" prose, sometimes too slyly decorous, occasionally fastidiously poetic, often enough as direct as a whip. His essays, mainly the later ones, are especially direct: truth-telling, balanced, "humanist"—kindhearted in a detached way, like, apparently, his personal cordiality. He had charm: a combination of self-importance (in the sense of knowing himself to be the real thing) and shyness. In tidy rooms at King's (the very same College he had first come up to in 1897) Forster in his seventies and eighties received visitors and courtiers with memorable pleasantness, was generous to writers in need of a push (Lampedusa among them), and judiciously wrote himself off as a pre-1914 fossil. Half a century after his last novel the Queen bestowed on him the Order of Merit. Then one day in the summer of 1970 he went to Coventry on a visit and died quietly at ninety-one, among affectionate friends.

That was the life. That none of this was meant to be trusted, not, certainly, to be taken at face value—least of all the harmonious death—suddenly came clear last year, when the British Museum let it be known it was in possession of an unpublished Forster novel, written in 1913, between the two masterpieces *Howards End* and *A Passage to India*; and that the novel was about homosexual love. Biographically, the posthumous publication of *Maurice** is the precise equivalent of "Gerald died that afternoon." (Trust the fiction, not the life.) It was to be sprung on us in lieu of a homily, and from the grave itself—another audacious slap in the face.

But literary shock, especially when it is designed to be didactic, has a way of finally trivializing. The suddenness of Gerald's death presses so hard for Significance that Significance itself begins to give way, and wilts off into nothing more impressive than a sneer. Forster, prodding the cosmos to do its job of showing us how puny we are, is left holding his little stick—the cosmos has escaped him, it will not oblige. Gerald's death may surprise, but the teaching fails: death *qua* death is not enough. We must have grief to feel death, and Forster did not give us enough Gerald to grieve over. We were never allowed to know Gerald well, or even to like him a little; he is an unsympathetic minor character, too minor to stand for the abyss. Shock does not yield wisdom on short acquaintance.

Maurice is meant to convey wisdom on longer acquaintance: here is a full-scale history of a homosexual from earliest awakening to puzzlement to temporary joy to

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frustration to anguish, and at last to sexual success. In *Maurice* it is society Forster prods, not the cosmos; it is one of Forster's few books in which death does not reverberate in any major way. But like the cosmos in *The Longest Journey*, society in *Maurice* eludes Forster's stick. In *Howards End* it did not: he impaled English mores in the house-renting habits of Mr. Wilcox, and wrote of the money-and-property mentality in such a way as to dishevel it permanently. *Howards End* is, along with *Middlemarch* thirty years before, the prototypical English Wisdom Novel —wisdom in the category of the-way-things-really-are, the nest of worms exposed below the surface of decency. *Maurice* is even more ambitious: it appears not merely to attack and discredit society, but to outwit it. How? By spite, by spitting in the eye of conventional respectability; by inventing a triumphant outcome against the grain of reality and (then) possibility. "A happy ending was imperative," Forster explained in a message which accompanies the novel in the manner of a suicide note (and is, in fact, styled by him a "Terminal Note"); like a suicide note it represents defense, forethought, revenge—the culmination of extensive fantasizing. "I shouldn't have bothered to write otherwise. I was determined that in fiction anyway two men should fall in love and remain in it for the ever and ever that fiction allows."

The key words are: in fiction. *Maurice*, in short, is a fairy tale. I don't choose this term for the sake of an easy pun, or to take up the line of ribaldry, and certainly not to mock. I choose it because it is the most exact. *Maurice* is not merely an idyll, not merely a fantasy, not merely a parable. It is a classical (though flawed and failed) fairy tale in which the hero is stuck with an ineradicable disability. In the standard fairy tale he may be the youngest of three, or the weakest, or the poorest and most unlikely—in Maurice's instance he is the oddest, and cannot love women. In the prescribed manner he encounters sinister advice and dissembling friends and gets his profoundest wish at the end, winning—as a reward for the wish itself—the hand of his beloved. The essence of a fairy tale is that wishing *does* make it so: the wish achieves its own fulfillment through its very steadfastness of desire. That is why fairy tales, despite their dark tones and the vicissitudes they contain so abundantly, are so obviously akin to daydreams—daydreaming is a sloughing off of society, not an analysis of it. To wish is not to explain; to wish is not to reform. In real life wishing, divorced from willing, is sterile and begets nothing. Consequently *Maurice* is a disingenuous book, an infantile book, because, while pretending to be about societal injustice, it is really about make-believe, it is about wishing; so it fails even as a tract. Fairy tales, though, are plainly literature; but *Maurice* fails as literature too. In a fairy or folk tale the hero, even when he is a trickster, is a model of purity and sincerity. What is pure and sincere in him is the force of his wish, so much so that his wish and his nature are one. But Maurice as hero has a flaw at the center of him; he is conceived impurely and insincerely.

This impurity Forster himself appears to concede. "In Maurice," the Terminal Note explains further, "I tried to create a character who was completely unlike myself or what I supposed myself to be: someone handsome, healthy, bodily attractive, mentally torpid, not a bad businessman and rather a snob. Into this mixture I dropped an ingredient that puzzles him, wakes him up, torments him and finally saves him." The impurity, then, is the ingredient of homosexuality dropped into a man who is otherwise purely Mr. Wilcox, lifted temperamentally intact out of *Howards End*: a born persecutor whom fear of persecution "saves" from the practice of his trait.

But whatever Forster's hope for Maurice was, this is not the sensibility he has rendered. It is impossible to believe in Maurice as a businessman or a jock (in Cambridge vocabulary, a "blood"). He is always Ricky of *The Longest Journey* (which means he is always Morgan Forster) got up in a grotesque costume—the Sensitive Hero as Callous Philistine—and wearing a wobbly wig. Whenever Maurice is most himself, the prose gives a lurch: it is Forster remembering, with a mindful shudder, to throw in a liter of mental torpidity here, a kilo of investment shrewdness there. But all that is artifice and sham. Forster loves music; Maurice is ignorant of it; consequently Maurice's self-knowledge occurs partly through Tchaikovsky. Forster at school recoiled from games and fell in love with Hellenism; Maurice has "physical pluck" and is an indifferent scholar (his "Greek was vile"); consequently on Prize Day he delivers a Greek Oration. No matter how Forster sidesteps it, Maurice keeps coming out Forster. After a while the absurdity of the effort to coarsen Maurice —to de-Morgan him, so to speak— fatigues; Forster's pointless toil at this impossibility becomes, for the reader, an impatience and an embarrassment. It is embarrassing to watch a writer cover his tracks in the name of exploring them. Purporting to show a hard man turn soft under the pressure of alienation from the general run of society, Forster instead (and without admitting it) shows a soft man turn softer—so soft he slides off into the teleology of the fairy tale. This falsification is the real impurity of the novel. Its protagonist falls apart at the marrow, like a book left outdoors overnight in the rain. *Maurice* cannot hold because Maurice is made of paper and breaks like dough at the first moist lover's squeeze.

One suspects Forster knew this. How could he not? He had already published three nearly perfect minor novels and one extraordinary major one. He had already created the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes. Written in his own handwriting across the top of the British Museum's typescript of *Maurice*, and put there possibly as late as 1960, were the Delphic words: "Publishable, but is it worth it?" The ambiguity is typical. Is the reference to the homosexual theme —or to the level of craftsmanship? That Forster was distinctly capable of detecting a falling-off from his own standard we know from

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his account of *Arctic Summer*, a work he abandoned midway because of "fiction-technicalities." Comparing the texture of his unfinished novel with the "density" of *A Passage to India*, he explained, "There must be something, some major object toward which one is to approach. . . .What I had in *Arctic Summer* was thinner, a background and color only." If he was able to sense the thinness of one novel and then let it go, why did he preserve *Maurice*, which he must surely have perceived as at least equally thin? In 1960, the date of the Terminal Note, thirty-three years had already passed since Forster's invention (in *Aspects of the Novel*) of the terms "flat" and "round" to describe the differences between characters in novels. A flat character is always predictable; a round character is not. Maurice is neither flat nor round, but something else —a ghost—and Forster must have known it. How could he not? What made him want to hang on to a protagonist so dismally flawed? The answer may be in the "something, some major object toward which one is to approach." In *Maurice* it is painfully easy to see what that major object is: sex, overt and unfudged. Forster preserved the approach but did not arrive. "There is no pornography," the Terminal Note scrupulously reports. So much the worse for Maurice. He is there—he was put to paper neither flat nor round—only for the sake of the sex scenes; and the sex scenes are hardly there at all. Maurice—neither flat nor round—is the ghost of undepicted, inexplicit coitus, of the missing "pornography."

Except for those absent sex scenes —one feels them struggling to be born, and Forster stamping them regretfully out at their earliest gasp—*Maurice* has no reason to be. It is a novel, if one can say such a thing, without a cause. Or, rather, the only genuine cause for it, the force that got it written, was a fresh and potent interest in all those matters that did *not* get written: the caresses in detail, the embraces, the endearments precisely depicted. Instead we are only handed plot. And to be handed plot is, in the case of *Maurice*, to be handed something worn out almost to risibility. It is not that *Maurice* has no plot; it does, and I suppose I am bound to recount a little of it; but it is a plot that Forster has dealt with at least twice before in the two novels of which *Maurice* is the shadow-novel, and, in fact, in what may have been the very first short story he ever wrote.*

In all of these—"Albergo Empedocle," *The Longest Journey*, *A Room with a View*—a poetic but naive hero (or heroine) falls in love with a woman (or man) who appears at first to be even more sensitive and poetic, but who betrays by turning out to be unable to love with equal tenderness or sincerity. In *The Longest Journey* Ricky, charmed by the eclogue-like scene he witnesses of the "Greek athlete" Gerald kissing Agnes in the dell, marries Agnes and finds instead that he has surrendered his spirit to coldness and cynicism. In *A Room with a View* Lucy, whose poetic nature is expressed in music, becomes engaged to Cecil; Cecil is brilliant, and therefore seems to be in love with art, Leonardo, and Italy, but is in reality "like a Gothic statue," which "implies celibacy, just as a Greek statue implies fruition." "Albergo Empedocle" describes the break-up of an engagement between Mildred, a young woman intellectually immersed in Hellenism, and Harold, who suddenly feels himself to be the reincarnation of a Greek youth. For the moment Mildred is romantically enraptured at the notion. But she ends up thinking her fiancé mad—whereupon he displays his love for another youth, ancient Greek-style. All these tender lovers, genuinely won to the Greek ideal of the body, are betrayed by a capricious and false Hellenism.

Maurice, too, finds his hard-earned Hellenism betrayed. In the joyfully liberating atmosphere of Cambridge he is introduced to music, Plato, and Clive Durham, a worshiper of Greece and a lapsed Christian. Like the others, they have their day in the dell and become lovers, though mainly sentimentally (Clive "abstained . . . almost from caresses"). Then Clive goes on a pilgrimage to Greece, and there—in Greece; irony!—"becomes normal." He has "turned to women," and enters the life of conventional county society, marrying coldly and growing more and more worldly and opportunistic. Maurice's outlook darkens. He too tries to "become normal." There follow relatively good, though thin, Forsterian scenes with a doctor (who can only say "Rubbish" to the idea of homosexuality) and a hypnotist (who decides the case is hopeless). Then comes the happy ending. Just as Lucy in *A Room with a View* flees from Cecil to marry the Pan-like figure of George Emerson, Maurice flees his family, his work, and society altogether, going off to live tenderly ever after with a rough-mannered but loving gamekeeper.

"THERE is no pornography." In short, a daydream without pictures. But what *Maurice* lacks, and what is necessary to it because it belongs at the heart of its imagining, *is* the pictures, *is* the "pornography"—or what Forster significantly continued to think of as pornography. What surely was not necessary was the reflex of Forster's ineluctable plot—the same story of compulsive attraction and callous faithlessness which he was driven to manipulate again and again, looking for some acceptable means to tell what he *really* wanted to tell about the importance of the body. It was pointless to write a book like *Maurice* unless the body in its exact—not implied, not poeticized—male lineaments could be truly shown. Forster did not show it truly. It is clear enough that he longed to show it truly—he lingers over those blurry passages in which he might have shown it truly, and instead reaches desperately for the expedient of poetry. "And their love scene drew out. . . . Something of exquisite beauty arose in the mind of each at last, something unforgettable and eternal, but built of the humblest scraps of speech and from the sim-

* Just made available in *Albergo Empedocle and Other Writings*, Liveright, 273 pp., $7.95.

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plest emotions." And of the flesh. But it is the flesh which Forster omits.

The reason for this omission, it seems to me, is not that in the England of 1913 Forster still did not dare to put it explicitly in (Gide in France had already launched *Corydon*, but that was France), and not even that Forster still belonged mentally to the England of 1897. No. The reason—unlikely though it may appear at first hearing—is that Forster thought homosexuality wrong: naturally wrong, with the sort of naturalness that he did not expect to date. (The Terminal Note admits that *Maurice* "certainly dates" in other respects, and mentions its "half-sovereign tips, pianola-records, norfolk jackets.") But if *Maurice* is a fairy tale, it is not because two men do not ever, then or now, out of fiction as well as in, live together happily and permanently, but because Forster himself believed that except in fiction and daydream they ought not to. Against his deepest wish he set his still deeper belief. *They ought not to*: despite the fact that he was always openly in favor of the liberalization in England of laws concerning homosexuality, despite the fact that as early as 1928, beginning with the *Well of Loneliness* case, he went to court to testify against the suppression of a homosexual novel, the first of a succession of such books he publicly defended and praised.

Forster's own books are full of masked portraits of repressed or hidden or potential homosexuals, from Ansell in *The Longest Journey* to Tibby in *Howards End* (who warms the teapot "almost too deftly," is called "Auntie Tibby" for fun, and is declared not to be "a real boy"). The description of Cecil in *A Room with a View* fits not only what the young Tibby will become, but what Maurice's lover Clive already is: "He is the sort who are all right as long as they keep to things—books, pictures—but kill when they come to people." Many of Forster's clergymen are seen to be embittered ascetics who, had they not suppressed the body, would have loved men. Mr. Borenius, the rector in *Maurice*, jealously accuses the gamekeeper of being "guilty of sensuality." It is because Forster himself is always on the side of sensuality, of "fruition" as against "celibacy," that all his spokesmen-characters, with profound sadness, eventually yield up their final judgment—on moral and natural grounds, and despite Forster's renowned liberalism—against homosexuality. *Maurice*, where the wish for lasting homoerotic bliss is allowed to come true, is no exception to Forster's moral conviction.

It is precisely on this issue of sensuality that Forster's reservations rest. Forster believes, with Christianity, that the opposite of sexuality is celibacy—and celibacy, to Forster, can only imply sterility. And not sterility in any metaphorical sense—not in the meaning of an empty or unused life. With Christianity, Forster believes that sensuality is designed to beget progeny. The most melancholy passage in *Maurice* occurs at Maurice's most ecstatic moment—when he is at last physically in possession of Clive:

> An immense sadness—he believed himself beyond such irritants—had risen up in his soul. He and the beloved would vanish utterly—would continue neither in Heaven nor on Earth. They had won past the conventions, but Nature still faced them, saying with even voice, "Very well, you are thus; I blame none of my children. But you must go the way of all sterility." The thought that he was sterile weighed on the young man with a sudden shame. His mother or Mrs. Durham might lack mind or heart, but they had done visible work; they had handed on the torch their sons would tread out.

And it is Ansell in *The Longest Journey* who gives the homosexual's view of progeny, which is renunciation. He is strolling in the British Museum talking of "the Spirit of Life" when he is told that Ricky and Agnes are expecting a child. His response: "I forgot that it might be." Then: "He left the Parthenon to pass by the monuments of our more reticent beliefs—the temple of the Ephesian Artemis, the statue of the Cnidian Demeter. Honest, he knew that here were powers he could not cope with, nor, as yet, understand." Artemis the protectress of women, Demeter the goddess of fertility. Thus Ansell. And thus Auden. Somewhere Auden has written that homosexual men do not love their sterility; that homosexuals too would welcome parenthood; but out of decency and selflessness forgo it.

"Be fruitful and multiply." That Forster alone perhaps of all homosexual writers is willing to take seriously the biblical injunction, and is left feeling desolated by it, is a measure of how attached he remained to Christian morals. In this attachment he was unlike any homosexual in his Cambridge generation, and possibly unlike any English-speaking homosexual in the generations afterward, Auden excepted. The Gay Liberation argument that homosexual activity is a positive good in a world afflicted by overpopulation would not have won Forster over.

HOMOSEXUALITY did not begin with Lytton Strachey, but homosexual manners did. All those habits and signals that we now associate with the educated homosexual sensibility can be said to have had their start in Cambridge when Strachey was an undergraduate; and Strachey set the style for them. Sects and persuasions, like nationalities, have their forerunners and traditions: presumably Franciscans still strive to retain the mind-set of St. Francis, Quakers recall George Fox, the white American South continues to feel itself patrician. Forster himself was influenced in liberal thinking by his ancestors in the Clapham Sect, an abolitionist group. The recollection need not be conscious; we inherit, rather than mimic, style. So with educated homosexual manners. The passion for beauty and distinction, the wit with its double bur of hilarity and malice, the aesthetic frame of mind, even the voice that edges thinly upward and is sometimes mistaken for "effeminacy"—all these are Stracheyisms. Strachey at Cambridge and afterward was so forceful in passing on Stracheyism

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that he founded a school, active to this day. It had, and has, two chief tenets: one was anti-philistinism expressed as elitism (one cannot imagine Strachey making a hero of a gamekeeper with no grammar, or addressing, as Forster did, a Working Men's College); the other was a recoil from Christianity.* In these tenets especially Forster did not acquiesce.

Though Forster knew Strachey well at Cambridge (he even confesses that a Cambridge character in *Maurice* was modeled on Strachey), he remained peripheral to the Strachey set. This astounding group was concentrated in the Cambridge Conversazione Society, better known as the Apostles, which mingled older alumni and undergraduates, never much more than a dozen at a time, and was devoted to intellectual wrangling, high wit, snobbery toward "bloods," and, in an underground sort of way, homosexuality: its brilliant members kept falling in and out of love with each other. At one time Strachey and John Maynard Keynes were both furious rivals for the love of one Duckworth; afterward Keynes, like Clive Durham, "became normal" and married a ballerina. Through all this Forster kept himself apart and remote, "the elusive colt of a dark horse," as Keynes called him. The Apostles churned out barristers, chief justices, governors of outlying parts of the Empire, dons, historians, economists, mathematicians, philosophers, many of them with family attachments to each other: in short, the ruling intellectual class of England more or less reproducing itself. The smaller "aesthetic" section of this privileged and brainy caste withdrew to become Bloomsbury; but from Bloomsbury too Forster held himself in reserve. One reason was his temperamental shyness, his inclination toward an almost secretive privateness. The more compelling reason was that he did not think or feel like the Apostles, or like Bloomsbury. He was more mystical than skeptical. The ideal of freedom from all restraint made him uncomfortable in practice. Unlike Strachey, he did not scoff easily or vilify happily (though it ought to be noted that there is a single radiant "Balls" in *Maurice*), and did not use the word "Christian" as a taunt. To the Apostles—self-declared "immoralists," according to Keynes—and to Bloomsbury he must have seemed a little out of date. He never shared their elation at smashing conventional ideas; though himself an enemy of convention, he saw beyond convention to its roots in nature. Stracheyan Bloomsbury assented to nothing, least of all to God or nature, but Forster knew there were "powers he could not cope with, nor, as yet, understand." Bloomsbury was alienated but not puzzled; Forster was puzzled but not alienated. His homosexuality did not divide him from society because he saw that society in the largest sense was the agent of nature; and when he came to write *A Passage to India* he envisioned culture and nature as fusing altogether. Homosexuality led him not away from but toward society. He accepted himself as a man with rights—nature made him—but also very plainly as a deviant—nature would not gain by him. It is no accident that babies are important in his books.

THE shock of the publication of *Maurice*, then, is not what it appears to be at first sight: Forster as Forerunner of Gay Lib. Quite the opposite. He used his own position as an exemplum, to show what the universe does not intend. If that implies a kind of rational martyrdom, that is what he meant; and this is what shocks. We had not thought of him as martyr. For Forster "I do not conform" explains what does conform, it does not celebrate nonconformity. He was a sufferer rather than a champion. Now suddenly, with the appearance of *Maurice*, it is clear that Forster's famous humanism is a kind of personal withdrawal rather than a universal testimony, and reverberates with despair. Christopher Lehmann-Haupt in a recent *Times* review remarks that Maurice's homosexuality is "a symbol of human feelings." But Forster woud disagree that homosexuality stands for anything beyond what it is in itself, except perhaps the laying waste of the Cnidian Demeter. Homosexuality to Forster signified sterility; he practiced it like a blasphemer, just as he practiced his humanism like a blasphemer. There is no blasphemy where there is no belief to be betrayed; and Forster believes in the holiness of the goddess of fertility: Demeter, guardian of the social order and marriage. The most dubious social statement Forster ever made is also his most famous one: if I had to choose between betraying my country or my friend, I hope I would have the guts to betray my country. He says "I"; the note is personal, it is not an injunction to the rest of us. *Maurice* instructs us explicitly in what he understood by "friend"; in Maurice's boyhood dream the word "friend" foretells the love of a man for a man. We have encountered that charged word in Forster before. The statement about betrayal cannot be universalized, and Forster did not mean it to be. Declarations about bedmates do not commonly have general application.

Does it devalue the large humanistic statement to know that its sources are narrowly personal? Yes. And for Forster too: he does not ask society to conform to him, because he believes—he says it again and again everywhere in his books, but nowhere more poignantly than in his novel about homosexual love—he believes in the eternal stream. He died among affectionate friends, but not harmoniously; he was not content to go the way of all sterility, to vanish utterly. Books are not progeny, and nature does not read.

* Stracheyism in intellectually attenuated and severely vulgarized form can currently be contemplated in the figure of Gore Vidal, whose homosexual *apologia* is firmly linked to anti-Christianity —only it is the "Judeo-Christian tradition" he more liberally excoriates. Reviewing an unimportant popular sex manual of lightweight distinction, and offended by its lack of openness to homosexuality, he accuses the (Jewish) author of owning a "rabbinical mind." Those with political minds can perhaps trace herein curious early signs of affinity between anti-Semitism and Gay Liberation. Strachey, however, would have written Vidal off as a philistine.

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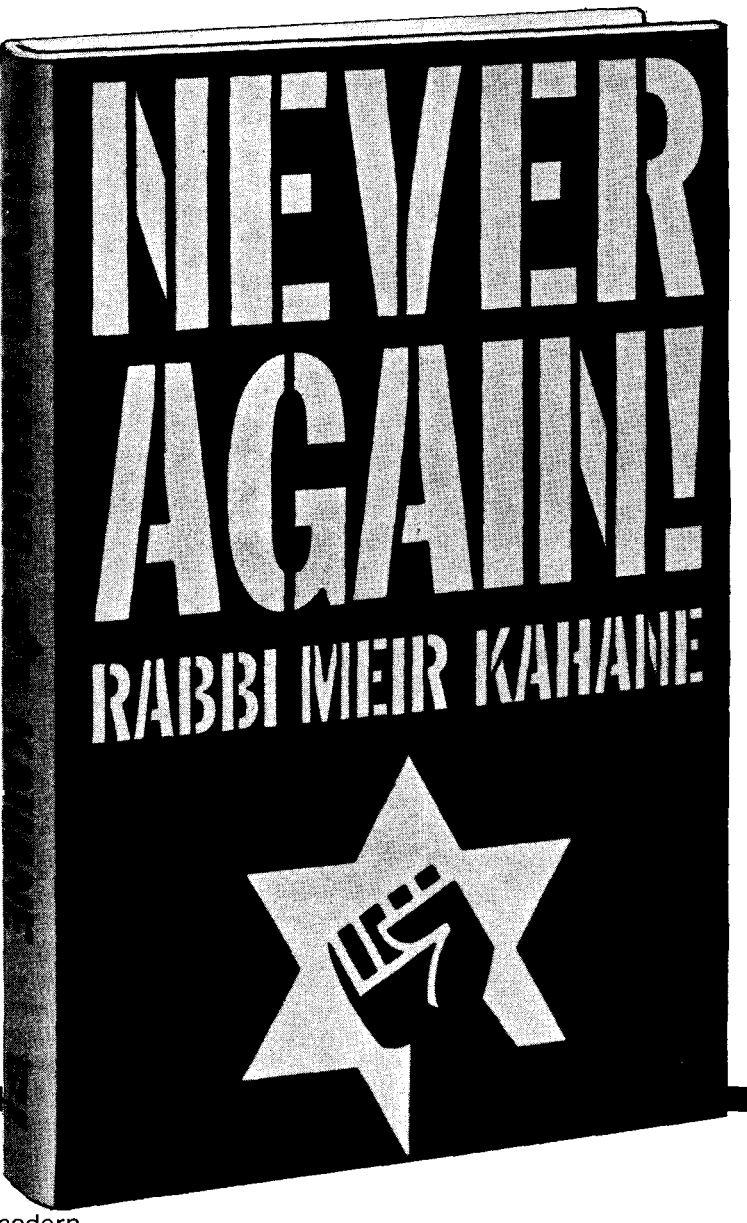

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Power Politics

TOWARDS A RATIONAL POWER POLICY: ENERGY, POLITICS & POLLUTION. By NEIL FABRICANT and ROBERT M. HALLMAN. *Braziller. 292 pp. $8.95.*

POWER GENERATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE. Edited by DAVID A. BERKOWITZ and ARTHUR M. SQUIRES. *MIT Press. 440 pp. $16.95.*

Reviewed by ROGER STARR

THESE two books, with similar if not interchangeable titles, cover the same subject but resemble each other as little as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* resembles Frederick Olmsted's *Journey Through the Seaboard Slave States*. My analogy is more than whimsical. Human slavery and the generation of electrical power both represent efforts to harness energy so that work may be done. One method relies on the grossly inefficient mobilization of human metabolism, while the other depends on converting heat to mechanical energy which can then be used to induce electric current in a wire coil by spinning it in a magnetic field. Both techniques—slavery and electric generation—have their critics who stand on moral or practical grounds, or both. Fabricant and Hallman belong to the Harriet Beecher Stowe school: they are radical abolitionists. The technical writers assembled by Squires and Berkowitz resemble Olmsted in their dedication to the goal of amelioration: recognizing that the act of abolition will not itself usher in a millennium of peace and plenty, they explore in detail the shortcomings of present-day electric power systems, and what can be done to surmount them.

Starting first with the Fabricant-Hallman work, we discover almost instantly that it is less a book in the traditional sense than a debater's outline. It was originally issued under the semi-official aegis of New York City's Environmental Protection Administration, an agency for which Fabricant and Hallman both work, or worked, and its purpose was to block approval by the city of a new fossil-fuel generating station in Astoria, Queens. But the brief, if one may so term it, does not limit itself to the merits of the specific proposal. In effect, it is a plea for a restraining order which would enjoin the court of public opinion from permitting the construction of any more non-nuclear thermal electric-generating plants in New York State, and which would make practically impossible the construction of additional nuclear plants as well.

Though they write in effect as lawyers asking for a decision on the pleadings, Fabricant and Hallman build their case against further construction of electric power stations with a minimum of evidentiary support, and a maximum of deductive reasoning. Following the scheme of their pleading in detail is probably unnecessary and, besides, it is extraordinarily difficult. The book consists of a photoelectric reproduction of a text produced on an electric typewriter. The text is presented in outline form—with the paragraphs numbered and lettered like a submission to a judge (or an instructor in a Junior High School history course)—but the short pages destroy the symmetry necessary to visualizing what is law and what is merely commentary. Yet the whole of it is impressive enough to demand comment, and the work has been unquestionably effective in at least one part of its aim; thanks to it, Mayor Lindsay, over the objections of his other advisers, reduced by half the size of the plant which Con Edison would be allowed to build. Ironically enough, the New York State Society of Professional Engineers has recently concluded that the plant as originally conceived would have *reduced* New York City's air pollution by speeding the retirement of Con Edison's pre-1940 installations; however, it is less good, in any case, than a similar plant built outside the city where a much smaller population would be affected by its smokestack emissions. Yet Fabricant and Hallman submit in their brief a recommended power "policy" which, by giving control of plant and transmission-line location to representatives of the governmental jurisdictions in which the plants would stand, or through which the lines would pass, would make such out-of-city plants practically impossible to build.

The authors plead that electric power generation in central stations is intrinsically hazardous, though the arguments they advance to support this seem, particularly in the light of the Berkowitz-Squires volume, astonishingly limp. Coal and oil plants are bad because they cause noxious gases to come from the stacks; no one likes the sulfur oxides, the nitrogen oxides, or even the carbon oxides that come pouring out. In trying to quantify the resulting health hazard, however, the authors give no data on the nitrogen oxides, which are responsible for the photochemical reaction called "smog." (In fact, 65 per cent of the nitrogen oxides in New York State's air is produced by sources other than electric power generation, mostly by automotive exhaust.) As for sulfur oxides, the authors tell us that "the combination of sulfur oxides and particulates" in New York City's air causes between 1,000 and 2,000 premature deaths per year. The figure is on the face of it appalling—it suggests that approximately 2½ per cent of the deaths in New York City each year result from air pollution—but we should give it a moment's consideration. Who derived the figure? The authors do not tell us, remarking instead that Ralph Nader's people accept it. Then what does the word "premature" mean in this context? If it means that 1,000-2,000 otherwise healthy New Yorkers, taken at

ROGER STARR's *article, "What's Left?" appeared in our August number.*

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random, die significantly earlier than is normal because of the sulfur in the air, we may remain appalled. But if it means that 1,000-2,000 New Yorkers who suffer from chronic asthma, emphysema, pulmonary tuberculosis, or other major respiratory and circulatory diseases live shorter lives in New York than they might in Tucson or Saranac Lake, we have been told nothing that wasn't equally true a hundred years ago. We also do not know how the longevity of such people might be affected by a shutdown of air-conditioning and electric elevators.

About the third noxious gas, carbon dioxide—carbon monoxide, the result of inefficient burning, is not produced by power plants—our authors tell us little, although it presents, on a global scale, a serious potential menace. The carbon dioxide content in the atmosphere has observably increased over the past decade, although no one knows whether this is due to increased man-made combustion, volcanic action, or some other cause. We also do not yet fully know how quickly the added carbon dioxide can be absorbed by plant life. Increased carbon dioxide in the air will inhibit the escape of heat from the earth, thus causing a warming of the climate, according to generally accepted scientific doctrine, and if the climate warms even a few degrees, the consequent melting of the polar ice cap could cause a worldwide disaster; but there is no general agreement that present trends in power generation will necessarily lead to such a result.

WHAT can be done to cut down effects which we can all agree are noxious, even if the extent of the danger they pose remains imprecise? Fabricant and Hallman claim that just about nothing can be done. In practice, sulfur oxides have been reduced in New York City by the burning of low-sulfur coal and oil, but since the supply of such fuel is limited, and since particulate matter from pulverized low-sulfur coal is harder to trap in the smokestack than the ash from higher-sulfur coal, the policy may itself be short-sighted. Professor Squires, in the other volume, suggests that new burning techniques in the power station may, when fully developed, not only reduce the sulfur emissions drastically, but also make it possible to recapture the sulfur for industrial purposes. Nitrogen oxides in the air would be significantly reduced, as they must be, by an improvement in automobile engines, or by a major replacement of private vehicular movement by electric-powered mass transit in the metropolitan area. Carbon oxides will be reduced only by the use of nuclear energy, which, since it does not involve combustion, will produce none.

Yet Fabricant and Hallman object seriously to the development of nuclear power plants, and for a familiar variety of reasons. First, and least equivocal, is the fact that nuclear plants of the *fission* type now in use or development waste significantly more heat than do fossil-fuel (coal, oil, or gas) plants. This, in turn, causes a rise in the temperature of the water drawn into the steam cycle of the nuclear plant in order to condense the steam propellant of the plant turbine. The return of the cooling water to natural watercourses heats them, and may seriously derange their ecosystems. The authors point out that no entirely satisfactory cooling system for nuclear power plants has been devised; any long-continued extension of the current rate of electric power increase will make such a development essential. I believe that on a very long-range timescale, the perfected use of nuclear *fusion* will make possible the direct conversion of heat energy to electricity without the use of the steam cycle; in the meantime, special cooling ponds, the use of liquid sodium as a coolant instead of water, and other cooling devices offer some hope of interim relief.

Fabricant and Hallman also discuss the problems of radioactivity, reaching the conclusion that the public-health dangers of radioactivity are "intolerable." (This conclusion is, incidentally, totally in conflict with Merrill Eisenbud's paper on the same subject in the other volume, and contrasts decisively with comments on the Eisenbud paper by other technical specialists, even though they are themselves generally less sanguine than he.) Fabricant and Hallman see three types of radioactivity perils: the danger of accident, the danger of genetic damage, and the danger of somatic damage.

Discussion of the reality of nuclear danger is a subject far out of reach of the lay commentator, who can observe only that since apparently expert opinion can be found either to minimize or to maximize the dangers, the selection of a point of view seems to reflect the world outlook of the selector more accurately than it reflects an objective assessment of the situation. With respect to nuclear accident, it is a fact that there have been more than 100 reactor years of operation in the commercial generation of power, and 780 reactor years in the United States Navy, without, in either category, a single serious nuclear accident involving the loss of life. It is also a fact that there have been no discernible adverse effects on the health of workers in nuclear power plants or on nuclear naval vessels. If the state of one's humors is good, one may wish to argue from these facts that there is no reason to believe that future nuclear generating plants will be any more dangerous to the population than the sidewalks of New York which, apparently, contain more radioactivity than the atmosphere surrounding a nuclear power station. If, on the other hand, one is afflicted, like Messrs. Fabricant and Hallman, with an excess of bile and choler, one might point out that the scale of a nuclear disaster, if one should occur, would be so tremendous that otherwise acceptable risks become unacceptable in the here and now; that the past is never a perfect guide to the future; and that the technicians of the world have assured their fellows of the safety of many inventions and developments which have since been disclosed to be anything but safe.

IN THE remainder of their book Messrs. Fabricant and Hallman unfurl the banners of their "rational" power policy, the object of which is to cut down the use, and, therefore, the generation, of

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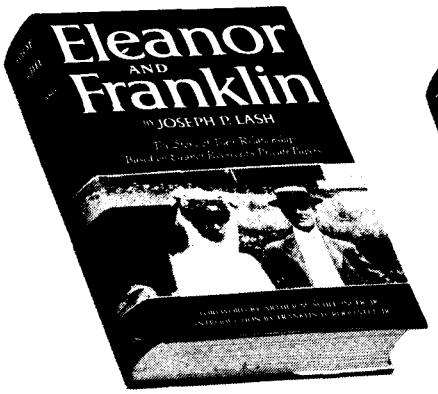
power. The basic premise on which this policy depends is that the demand for power has been carefully cultivated by the power interests, through advertising and political pressure, and that therefore a government that truly represented its constituents would protect them from the further development of an inherently destructive demand. This takes us to the heart of what I have called the abolitionist argument, which, since it has already been put forth with some persuasiveness by others, and since it will be increasingly heard of in the future, I propose to deal with at some length.

Fabricant and Hallman tell us that three venal factors fertilize the "projected increase in the per capita consumption of electricity." These are, *first,* the constantly diminishing price of electricity, due to the fact, specially mentioned among others which are not mentioned, that no one takes account of the costs venally imposed by electric generation on the environment; *second,* the use, by New York's venal utilities (and others) of what the authors call a *promotional* rate structure, in which the unit price of electricity diminishes as the use, by any consumer, increases; *third,* the promotional and advertising activities of the generating companies and their allies, the manufacturers of electrically-powered equipment, in the effort to aggrandize profits by increasing sales at a lower unit price.

IN REGARD to the first charge—the failure to include in the rate structure the true general cost of environmental degradation—the authors admit the presence of a difficult problem in quantification. They do give us a list of nine "factors" which might be considered in such a quantification. Among them are some which, on present evidence, would not universally be acknowledged to exist ("calculating the cost of genetic damage resulting from radiation exposure"). Others involve unmentioned offsetting costs which would also have to be taken into account in establishing a fair rate base, as for example, "the economic cost to a particular locality of businesses or industries relocating in another



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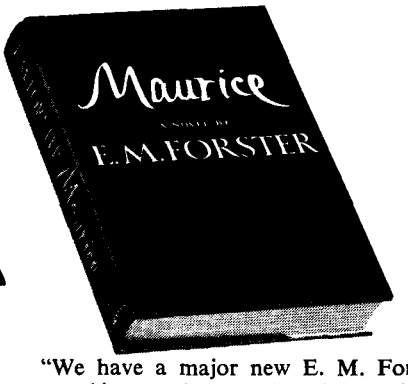

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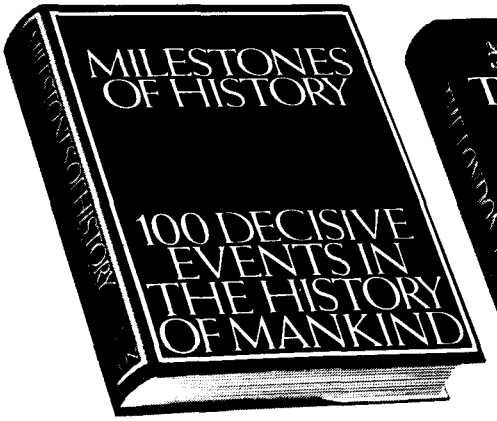

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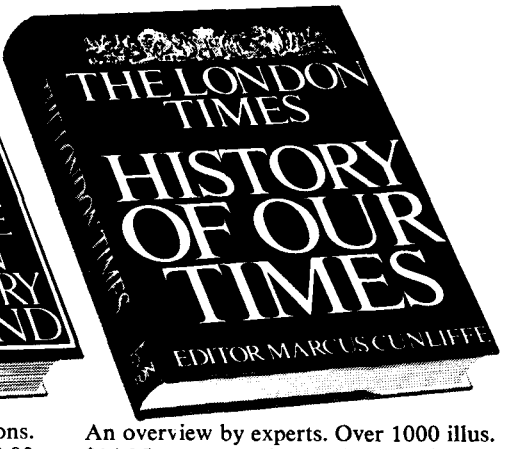

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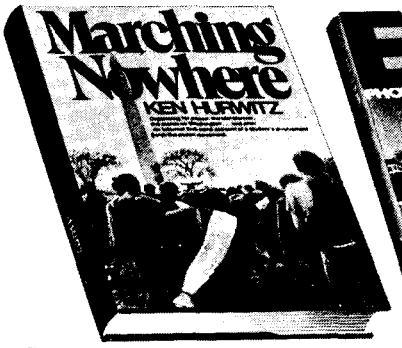

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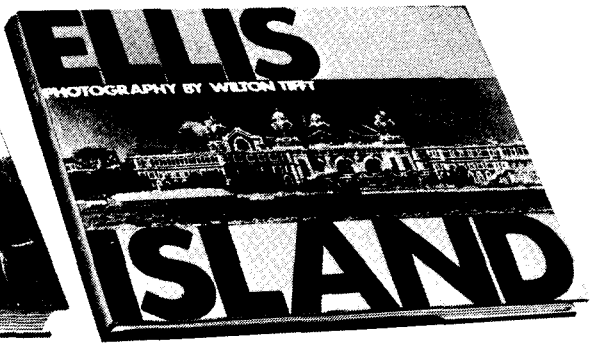

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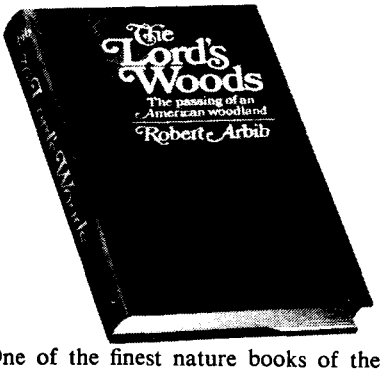

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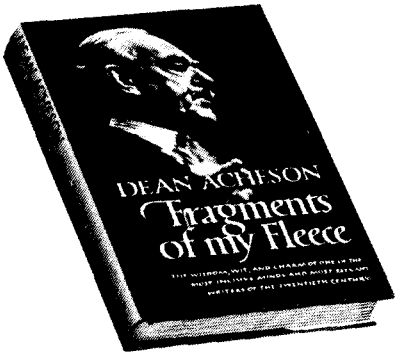

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area as a result of environmental degradation." To set this up properly, one would have to subtract from it as a *contra*-account the economic cost to a particular locality of businesses or industries relocating because of excessively *high* power costs, or the non-availability of power for manufacturing or transportation of employees and goods. A third group of factors can be identified as roughly quantifiable, like property damage and cost of illness associated with electric-generating air pollution, but since these depend on an analysis of effects which the authors have already tried to describe specifically, but, at least in my view, unsuccessfully, we may still be said to lack a truly firm foundation on which to begin the assessment of such costs. Finally, the authors propound, as one factor, a question which goes to the kernel of the whole argument: "Should social costs be predicted [predicated?] on the harm caused by power generation and distribution or on the funds necessary to prevent or eliminate harm?"

Here the authors have finally run head-on into the essential incompatibility between religious and economic concepts. If social costs are in any sense quantifiable —if they are to be met by charges paid directly by those who own the productive process and indirectly by those who buy its services or goods—then one must be prepared to cover those costs from the income received on the sale of the product. If environmental damage is to be "prevented or eliminated" by increased capital investment—for example, if commercial fishing losses are to be "prevented or eliminated" by new installations of cooling ponds as in Illinois, where such utility-built ponds have actually increased fishing and recreational resources—the costs of the additional capital must be recouped from the payments made by the consumers of electricity. To the extent that these added costs are, in fact, the costs of additional capital, the cost apportioned to each unit of the product will grow smaller as the number of units sold increases.

There may, of course, be some environmental problems which can be met by changes in operating procedures, such as burning costlier low-sulfur fuel; these added costs are apportioned equally, kilowatt hour by kilowatt hour. But in general the nature of the environmental problems which Fabricant and Hallman describe suggests that they are primarily to be met by added capital investment. If electricity generation is to eliminate and prevent environmental damage, its product, electricity, must be sold on a price schedule which encourages consumption. The alternative is to set rates so high that only the wealthy can afford it. Promotional rates, which the authors decry as their second point, become the inevitable result of adding expensive devices to the capital base of the electric generating station in order to diminish the impact of that station on the environment.

If, on the other hand, the cost of electricity is to be boosted by a mere money allowance "for damaging the environment," we are either conspiring to pay a few people for what has been a general loss—for example, paying "fishermen" for their loss in fish when what has been lost affects everyone —or else we are simply making it possible for some regulatory body to prevent the construction of any electric power facility whatsoever by establishing on its books an environmental liability which cannot be met in money terms. Suddenly, it seems that what Fabricant and Hallman are seeking to avoid is not environmental degradation but original sin.

To my worldly objection that a liability which cannot be liquidated in cash can be discharged only by termination of the business, Fabricant and Hallman would respond, I suspect, that the world would be a better place without electricity—electric power generation being, as they put it, grossly inefficient. They suggest, for instance, that home heating, for which they claim 90 per cent "efficiency," is much preferable to central-station electric heating, which they tell us is only about 35 per cent efficient. What they do not say is that the efficiency loss in the present central-station generating cycle occurs almost entirely in the course of turning heat into mechanical energy; house heating is cheaper than centrally generated electric heating because in homes the heat energy is used directly as heat. However, oil cannot be burned in a home heating plant without some electric energy to operate the blower and atomize the fuel, and in any case most home plants are reported to operate at much lower efficiency than the theoretical rate, while the smoke from the hundreds of thousands of oil heaters in the small homes and apartment houses of New York City presents an enforcement problem far more serious than that presented by the plants of Con Edison.

THE second of the authors' three counts places the blame for the increasing per capita consumption of electricity on the use of what they choose to call promotional rates. Electric rates in New York State do provide that the charge per kilowatt hour decreases with each increment of actual use, thus reflecting the reduction in marginal cost of the capital-intensive electricity process. Gordon R. Corey, chairman of the Finance Committee of Commonwealth Edison, claims that electric power companies "use more capital than almost any other business—$3.66 of net plant investment per dollar of revenue" as against 74 cents per dollar of sales for the steel industry, and 23 cents for the automobile industry (his figures). Industrial electricity charges offer an even greater incentive to high use because they include a flat charge which does not fluctuate according to actual use. Under the "demand" system employed in New York City, an industrial user pays a stipulated charge for the peak demand which he may expect to make on the system. This charge is designed to assess the ultimate consumer for the amount it costs the utility to install the additional capacity he needs, and the authors should praise it for that reason. Yet, as the actual use increases, the "effect" of this charge on each kilowatt hour of consumption grows smaller, and for that reason the authors should condemn it. Curiously, they omit

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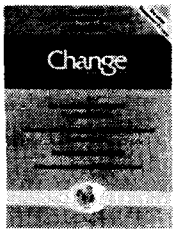

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any discussion of it altogether.

Curiouser, but hardly stranger, is the omission by the authors of any reference to the tax impost placed on Con Edison by the New York City government. New York State's local utility tax permits the city to exact an income equal to a percentage of the value of a utility company's total property, personal as well as real. This tax makes the New York City government the biggest beneficiary of Con Edison's capital. Although some of that capital is invested outside city limits, the City's dollar tax receipts on Con Edison's investments still exceed the income received by all Con Edison bondholders and stock owners combined. Somehow the authors have neglected to mention that this tax is levied on invested capital, and that if that capital were to be grossly underemployed, as they wish it to be, the consequent tax impact per kilowatt hour would make the ordinary household bill even greater than it is, and it is already the highest in the nation. The way for government to discourage a "promotional" rate structure is to reshape its own taxing policies. It could, for example, change its local utility tax from an *ad valorem* basis—the impact of which encourages increased sales—to a use or sales tax which would remain a constant burden per sales unit, no matter how the load increased. But municipal governments are getting too much money from the present system to consider such a change seriously.

THE third and last of the counts excoriates the utilities for undertaking advertising and promotional campaigns which are intended to increase the consumption of electricity. Fabricant and Hallman suggest that many of the uses of electricity are not really willed by the people of New York State, but are imposed on them by the clever publicists of the power companies. Certainly it is true that manufacturers, large and small, happily devise new gadgets, both meaningful (to use one of the authors' busier words) and meaningless, to entice money from the wallets of their customers. Some of these gadgets are electrically powered. Those among them that are battery driven might commend themselves to our authors. Others, alas, plug into the socket to brush the teeth, slice the steak, or polish the boots electrically. Their total power demand scarcely seems significant. But if our authors believe that it is advertising that made air-conditioning popular in New York City in August, or promotion that forced large-screen color television on people against their better judgment, I must differ with their appraisal of the powers of these arts.

Fabricant and Hallman never propose what one might expect them to propose—a frank limitation on the wattage of installed air-conditioning per family unit, or a ban on the construction of office buildings with electric-powered air-conditioning. This, at least, would put the issue fairly. Instead, they suggest that advertising perverts the public taste and makes rational thinking impossible. This moral indictment should be regarded with some skepticism. Power companies use advertising generally for two purposes. The first of these purposes I detest; it involves the attempt to bring about legislation that will be favorable to privately-owned power systems, or unfavorable to public systems. The second, more benign, purpose is to help bring about a balanced power demand that will enable the power generating system to enjoy more efficient round-the-clock and round-the-calendar employment of its capital investment. While our authors are startled and frightened by economic motives, I continue to believe that the savings in capital and in the public tax load that can be made possible by a system used efficiently would be sufficient to finance improvements in combustion, cooling, and nuclear technology at a cost which the subway rider, the elevator passenger, the seamstress in a New York garment factory, and, yes, even the television viewer, can afford.

In sum, I am unsympathetic to the authors' suggestions for a "rational" power policy. Instead of attempting to calculate the state's total power needs and to provide a mechanism for meeting them with the least possible disturbance of natural resources and natural values, they create a system heavily weighted with local interests, relying on the parochial spirit to prevent the construction of power plants and transmission lines. This is sly, but, in the end, not sly enough to escape the attention of the subway traveler whose train stalls for lack of power. I do not believe that any system for regulating power can be called rational which would discourage efforts to achieve a balanced electric load; which would permit local representatives to block or (at tremendous cost) bury high-tension transmission lines, thus making inevitable the construction of power stations only in population centers that require their output; which would add to the present regulatory structure a new commission on power sites, heavily biased in the direction of local participation and larded with three "official citizens" not one of whom represents either industrial interests or the consuming public. All of these recommendations constitute semi-concealed efforts to accomplish the goal of reducing power production and use, but none of them would put the question squarely to the public: What electric service do you want, and at what cost?

THE Berkowitz-Squires book—based on a seminar held only two years ago, but already somewhat dated by technological developments in the interim—offers a welcome relief from the political-legal approach to the problems of pollution. The technicians spread no universal cheer. The problems of atmospheric pollution are not susceptible of easy answers, nor is the case different with the effects of heated effluent from power stations, radiation, or hydropower projects.

The relief offered by the technicians is rather one of attitude: the determination found in the best of these papers to arrive at the facts within the limits of scientific observation, and to see the problems as they really are, whether they are amenable to political action or not. Thus, Arthur Squires, writing about the effort to find a way to extract heat from coal with mini-

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mal environmental damage, points out that the biggest handicap to new technology does not lie in the desire of the utilities to sell more power, nor in a defect in the regulatory process, but rather in the fact that all of the capital of the fossil-fuel electric power stations is invested in plants wedded to a basic technology—pulverized fuel burning—which may not be the best technology for successful in-plant extraction of sulfur. Merrill Eisenbud is equally interesting on the credibility problems of nuclear power, and remarkably lucid in his discussion of the several different types of reactors now in use or under development. Dr. Shields Warren, of the Cancer Research Institute of the New England Deaconess Hospital in Boston, tells us that "if we had applied the same rigorous standards for the maintenance of public health and safety as are current in the atomic energy industry, there would be no aviation or automobile industry, few chemical plants or oil refineries, few sewage systems." (Some would of course say that it would be a very good thing if these developments had in fact not occurred, but the remark is frivolous as well as idle.)

THE Squires-Berkowitz book is not without its surprises. Harry Perry, Senior Specialist in Environmental Policy at the Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress, tells us that strip mining, *properly done*, damages the environment far less than underground mining, and he provides photographs in support of the point. Richard Cadle and Eric Allen tell us that as fast as carbon dioxide warms the atmosphere, particulate matter, cutting down the sun's penetration, cools it again. The discussion, by a number of experts with different backgrounds and interests, of the problem of thermal effects indicates how complex the subject really is. While none of the experts minimizes the problem, all have hopes for a solution or solutions to the dissipation of waste heat with minimal adverse effects: some even foresee its useful application. Underlying all of these technical discussions is the belief that advanced technology, together with the strategic allocation of resources to power generation—free from provincial constrictions—insures that what men have created they can also control.

This promise will fall far short of the requirements of those who believe that all power, including the electrical variety, corrupts, and that pollution must be cast off like wickedness, if the race—and the individual—are to survive. Something of this spirit, I fancy, moved the priests of the wheel-less Mayan civilization to extirpate, *seriatim*, all the bright young men who, I am convinced, invented the wheel and brought it to them for approval. I suspect that the priests of Yucatan were unwilling to risk anything that might have threatened the immortality of the civilization they loved; you can almost see them if you go there, surrounded by its ruins.

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Covering Up

THE UNFASHIONABLE HUMAN BODY. By BERNARD RUDOFSKY. *Doubleday. 281 pp. Illustrated. $12.95.*

Reviewed by ANNE HOLLANDER

THE subject of clothing is hardly ever discussed seriously by serious writers except for certain Frenchmen, some of whom have thereby helped to promote and maintain the French reputation for frivolity rather than the subject's reputation for weight. English moralists since Oscar Wilde have almost completely neglected the topic, although it had long been discernible to writers like Ruskin and Carlyle that the fashionable dress of men had diverged sharply from that of women, as well as from its earlier glories. But the effect of such observations on most 19th-century English literary men was to lead them to hold the dress of their own time up to ridicule rather than to explore its mysteries or celebrate its possible aesthetic charm.

Between the World Wars, however, a rash of speculative literary essays on dress broke out, arising in part, perhaps, from a sudden awareness of the total change in fashionable female clothing which had occurred, with unprecedented speed, over the preceding thirty years. Although there were few changes in men's clothing during the same period, a fashionable woman who was eighteen at the turn of the century and forty-eight in 1930 would have been transformed in those years into a shape unimaginable to previous generations. Earlier changes in women's fashion had never gone so far as to require the disappearance of corsets and long skirts—those badges of sex crystallized for Western women in the 14th century and, except for a short time following the Napoleonic wars, never thereafter wholly abandoned. Demands for dress reform, to be sure, had accompanied the English and American female rebellion of the second half of the 19th century, and starting with the famous bloomers in the early 1850's, rapidly became a crank cause of considerable publicity value. Nevertheless, the really visible changes occurred with a rush only after the First War. With these changes arose an interest in the history and meaning of fashion among a variety of different authors. Concern for the psychological matrix of fashion and its sociological implications, for example, was apparent in such works as J. C. Flügel's *The Psychology of Clothes* (1930) and Hilaire Hiler's *From Nudity to Raiment* (1929), while Gerald Heard, in *Narcissus: An Anatomy of Clothes* (1924), undertook to consider the subject phenomenologically.

Prior to this sudden burst of writing, costume history had been almost entirely the preserve of antiquarians, who studied the dress of the past as others studied old silver and porcelain. As a subject for frivolous conjecture and chatty whimsy, fashion had always been fair game for those whose main purpose was to issue comments on the amusing vagaries and follies of mankind. At the same time, other commentators expressed a sense of helplessness in the face of what they considered an incomprehensible force, even a kind of moral slavery. Indeed, apart from antiquarian zeal, an intense fear or hatred of fashion appears to have been the only serious impulse behind writings on dress in the works of the past (always excepting the French), from the fulminations of Isaiah to the turn of the 20th century, when the detached tones of Thorstein Veblen struck the first notes of what would later become a chorus of utterances drowning out moralists and satirists alike, and apparently stifling literary impulses as well. Except for the still indefatigable antiquarians, the question of dress was finally left in the hands of anthropologists, psychologists, and fashion journalists.

DURING the 1930's the establishment of art history as an academic discipline brought with it some sense of the possible uses to be made of costume history as an aid to criticism and connoisseurship; but on the whole professional art and cultural historians have ignored the subject. The 1940's gave birth to the coffee-table art book, some examples of which had respectable art-history texts unobtrusively placed among the incredibly seductive reproductions, and some of which were packed with similarly unnoticed vulgar banalities. Books on dress also began to appear at this time, liberally spiked with arresting photographs and lopsided with hastily compiled, insufficiently examined lore about other cultures or other periods. Among these was *Are Clothes Modern?*, Bernard Rudofsky's first book on clothes, published in 1947. It was essentially an expansion of an exhibition catalogue for a show of the same name, mounted by Rudofsky at the Museum of Modern Art in 1944. The displays included juxtapositions, extrapolations, suggestions, and jokes, in the manner of Saul Steinberg. There were three-dimensional models of fashionably distorted body-shapes from the past, a full-scale picture of the Charioteer of Delphi, a life-size, plastic construction showing the placement of the many useless buttons and pockets in modern male garments. Viewers were treated to unfamiliar sights: the paired pictures of a woman in a fashionable 1880's bustle and a naked Hottentot woman with huge buttocks, the latter apparently suited physically to wear the dress of the former (ha ha); a 16th-century corset of iron; and the forced-up, exposed breasts of a Minoan snake-goddess, so startling when viewed as an example of fashionable dress rather than as religious art.

The show and the book together had a message and a program: our dress is foolish, and we should learn from more enlightened cultures, chiefly the ancient Greek. Garments should be made of simple, geometrical shapes, feet should be liberated by sandals. It was true that the spirit of experiment and freedom of expression in dress had atrophied in a wartime America, but it was soon to be revived by radical postwar changes in fashion, prescribed by Parisian designers and hotly discussed and considered by the pub-

ANNE HOLLANDER *is currently working on a book about art and dress.*

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lic, and the 1944 Modern Museum exhibit appealed to the newly justified public interest in fashion and in other luxuries. At the time, Mr. Rudofsky's observations on our limited view of suitable clothing were pointed and telling, particularly when conveyed visually. *Are Clothes Modern?* posed a question which has been answered by the development of undeniably new habits of dress in the second half of the 20th century. Clothing has undergone a true shift once more, this time chiefly among men, a group notoriously slow to move along these lines.

Mr. Rudofsky's new book about clothes, *The Unfashionable Human Body*, is, like the first, a group of pieces about dress, sex, and notions of modesty, and how human beings have conceived of themselves as dressed creatures primarily for sexual purposes. Unfortunately, the appearance of this work must mark Mr. Rudofsky as a crank where he was once something of a prophet. The new book is virtually a reworking of the original, with some of the same text, most of the same pictures, and, now hopelessly out of date, the same message.

Mr. Rudofsky still feels it necessary to write archly and scornfully about modern clothing, and in heavy-handed and insultingly mocking tones to attack already outmoded conventions as if they were still being smugly and uncritically adhered to. In a chapter called "The Fashionable Body," he deals with the subject of the corset, which he describes as an instrument of torture, and ridicules for having been thought a moral as well as an aesthetic necessity in the 19th century; but he fails to mention the 18th-century corset, to which no moral virtue was ever attached and, incidentally, about which no remarks were written which might now seem funny if quoted. He writes as if whalebone stays were invented in Victorian times to deform the body for depraved reasons, although he must know that corseting has a long, shifting, complex history, one that is elaborately involved with the whole development of style in dress and its representation in art. This subject,

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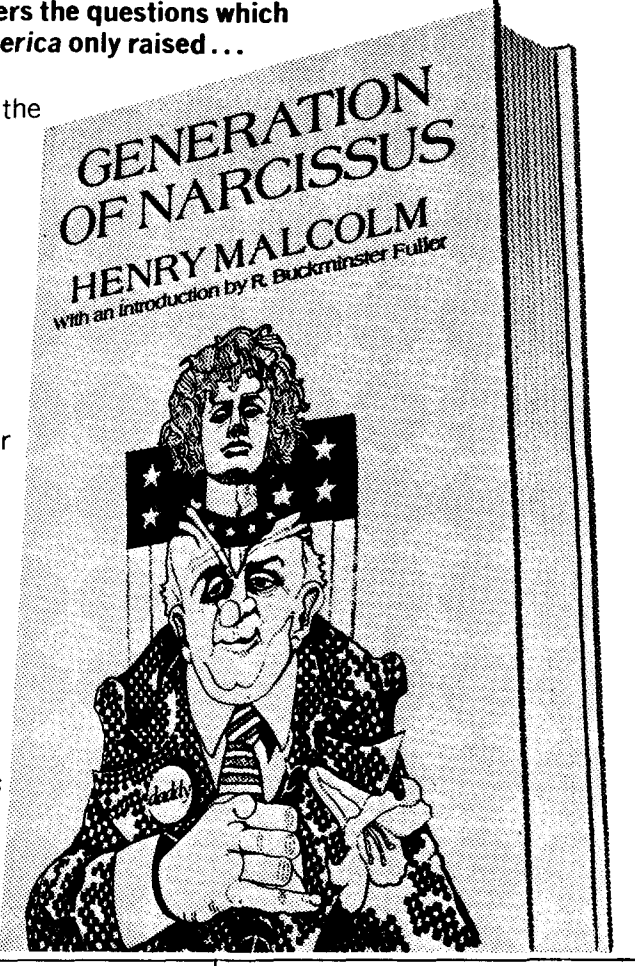

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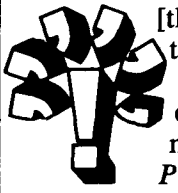

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like many others Mr. Rudofsky treats, is of real interest. Dragging it out of obscurity merely to kick it around is truly an unworthy act.

MR. RUDOFSKY'S remarks on trousers and tailored clothing in general are unnecessarily scathing (he adduces a wealth of material in this connection to show how others have agreed with him in his simultaneous praise of classical drapery and Japanese kimonos). But his attitude is all too easy to accept without question, not because he writes persuasively, but because it has long become an established view, almost a cliché, that modern clothing is dull and awkward compared with Greek drapery or Renaissance finery. But trousers are neither uncomfortable nor unbeautiful—despite the long tradition, born out of 19th-century romantic yearnings toward loose Eastern robes or medieval gowns, of considering them a hopeless failure.

In truth we do not simply endure trousers and long sleeves in modern life; we positively enjoy them, as all civilizations have enjoyed their clothes. Mr. Rudofsky allows this, but he refuses to allow our enjoyment to be aesthetic, preferring instead to emphasize a masochistic pleasure in discomfort, noticeable throughout the world. Cut, sewn, and fitted garments are allegedly an example of this, though mild enough in comparison with corsets, high heels, bound feet, and flattened heads. In actual use, however, trousers have every virtue which one could demand of clothing: they are comfortable, as women have long understood while being restrained from wearing them, they can be extremely erotic on either sex, and they are, in fact, aesthetically pleasing if one can exorcise the ghosts of draped Greeks from the mind's eye. The very thing for which they have been ridiculed—the enclosing of the bending, molded leg into a cylinder—produces a constantly shifting pattern of folds and a characteristic movement of cloth to which we are all accustomed and which is somehow quite satisfying. A tailored jacket is a masterpiece of nuance, molding and skimming the body in different places, so that it is by a triumph of art both a loose and a fitted garment, both snug and mobile. The casual disposition of the shapes of a man's suit while he is comfortably sitting in an armchair is an elegant phenomenon, rarely celebrated except in commercial art, but certainly appreciated by any ordinarily discerning and responsive eye.

Mr. Rudofsky's book is a loose collection of loosely constructed essays rather than a systematic study. Still talking on his feet while walking through an exhibit, he has the air of preaching to the converted while under the impression that he is casting pearls before swine. Mostly we are taught about our shortcomings, since the conclusion is that Modern Western Man—particularly Modern American Man—is the most insensitive idiot who ever lived. This is nothing new to us, and the effect is ultimately depressing, naturally enough, despite our momentary amusement at such things as Jaeger's Woolen System of Dress. He is at his best when he is not trying to be funny, but engaging in simple exposition or description, for example in his account of the adoption of Western dress by the Japanese in the 19th century, and by the Turks in the 20th; or his explanations of the difficulty of drawing a picture of a clothed figure based on a description of it or determining how a garment is cut from the way it looks when worn; or the problems of clothing in monumental figurative sculpture.

BUT as an essayist, Mr. Rudofsky finally fails because he annoys where he should aim most to please—in his style itself. Lightly conceived remarks about serious things are always read with delight if they appear to have been skimmed off the surface of an enormously cultivated, humane intelligence; but Mr. Rudofsky appears somehow to have raided his material rather than to have read it. He has plucked juicy tidbits out of a whole range of texts (sometimes incorrectly, as when he misquotes the Psalms, uses "cherubim" as a singular noun, or quotes a passage from the *Song of*

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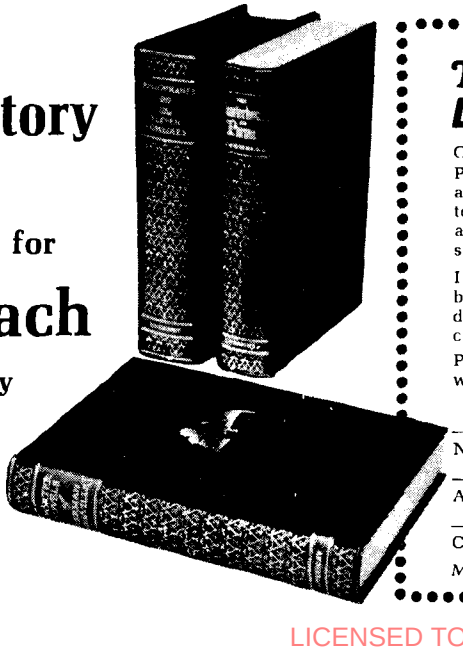

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Roland which isn't there). This book must compare unfavorably with James Laver's recent *Modesty in Dress* (1969), covering virtually the same subject. Mr. Laver has been writing about clothes with civilized enthusiasm and wit ever since the 30's, so that in his case the lack of heavy scholarship is clearly a virtue because the authority of his accumulated wisdom, so suavely and firmly indicated, is sufficient; in Mr. Rudofsky's volume, the apparent lack of respect for all scholarship, taken together with the sarcastic and exaggerated tone, prevents us from believing in what is said or from forgiving the slightest error. The material is enormous, the subject profound; Mr. Rudofsky seems to have betrayed them.

American Enigma

JAMES MADISON. A BIOGRAPHY. By RALPH KETCHAM. *Macmillan. 753 pp. $17.50.*

Reviewed by JAMES R. ADAMS

JAMES MADISON, framer and interpreter of the Constitution, is universally, and rightly, regarded as the primary theoretician of American pluralist democracy. His great treatises in the *Federalist Papers* have never been surpassed as expositions of American political principles and have never been more valid than in the circumstances of the 20th century. So much had Madison accomplished by his thirty-third year that his subsequent career was bound to produce an anti-climax. Nevertheless, one would hardly expect the perplexing changes of heart that followed his service at Philadelphia in the Constitutional Convention —changes which his biographers have recorded with astonishment. For scarcely had Madison set down his constitutional principles when he found them inadequate to resist an apparent subversion, and soon afterward he cast his lot with Jefferson in the latter's protracted and bitter struggle against the two other authors of the *Federalist*. In the Constitutional Convention, Madison had stated that "no fatal consequences could result" from "a tendency in the General Government to absorb the State Governments"; in *Federalist* 10, he had presented the supporting arguments for this view. But a decade later he helped proclaim the constitutional heresies contained in the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions and thereby lent his prestige to the advocates of state sovereignty and hence to the train of thought that led to nullification and secession.

Every fresh excursion into Madisonian scholarship is an event of some note, extending as it does the promise of new insight into this baffling career; and the interest in Ralph Ketcham's new biography is the greater for its author's credentials. This biography draws on Ketcham's work for the *Papers of James Madison*, that monumental project which entails the compilation and editing of every available scrap of Madisoniana. Ketcham has found this mine of material a valuable resource not only for the substance of his book but for its style: like many American historians, he writes readably enough, but depends for color on anecdote and picturesque quotation. And yet his labor in the mother lode has failed to produce a convincing and comprehensive explanation for Madison's tergiversations.

In fact, if Ketcham advances a consistent thesis, it is that Madison suffered no radical conversions, that changes in the political milieu accounted for the changes in his position, and that under it all, he held firm to his basic beliefs. This thesis leads Ketcham into continual apologetics. He argues Madison's side of every controversy, sometimes with ingenuity, sometimes not. One should not of course deny out of hand the possibility that Madison's vacillations had a principled basis, distorted or misunderstood by his enemies. Ketcham gropes for a fundamental train of thought that would justify such a reading of the evidence, but in the end, he fails to give it content, and his one extended discussion of Madison's political philosophy partakes of a certain circularity. There is a boundary, marked by placards reading "the recognition of human diversity" or "the principle of consent," which Ketcham's inquiry never crosses. The origins of these slogans and the theories behind them remain in obscurity.

Within those limits, however, Ketcham has written a competent and salutary book. He writes as a historian, he deals mainly with politics and diplomacy, and at these he is very good. Frequently his material is better organized, more lucidly presented, and more completely discussed than in the remarkably few other distinguished biographies of Madison.* There are throughout the book examples of superb historical craftsmanship. Ketcham explains complicated national and international developments in crisp and accurate summaries and draws significant social and political observations from apparently trivial detail. Considering his intelligent presentation of such a broad range of history, perhaps we ought not to complain that in discussing Madison's philosophic background, he summarizes Locke's political thought without mentioning property, or that he overlooks the difference between Locke and Aristotle.

BUT the puzzle of Madison's career remains unsolved in spite of Ketcham's historiographical skill, and the reason, perhaps, is that the puzzle is not primarily historical or political at all, but theoretical. For Madison was not an ordinary politician; he was also the most rigorous of American political thinkers. His early career culminated in the Constitution, the *Federalist Papers*, and an original political theory. This theory held, in essence, that republics did not, as Americans had concluded from Montesquieu, necessarily have to be limited to a small

JAMES R. ADAMS *is currently working in Washington, D.C. as a Congressional Assistant.*

* I have in mind particularly Irving Brant's monumental six-volume biography, which is now in print only in a one-volume condensation, *The Fourth President: A Life of James Madison* (Bobbs-Merrill, 1969, 681 pp., $12.95). Marvin Meyers is currently preparing a selection of Madison's papers for the Bobbs-Merrill American Heritage Series.

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BAIL FOR ANGELA DAVIS — AN APPEAL TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE

But this is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses: they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil and none saith, Restore.—*Isaiah 42:22*

The Jewish community and its leading organizations, many of which have worked closely with the NAACP for civil rights and equality, should associate themselves with that organization in the appeal it made at its January 11th Board of Directors meeting when it stated:

"We are appalled at the obvious effort to deny the presumption of innocence and thereby convict Miss Angela Davis of murder long before the first witness has been called. We are deeply concerned that the American judicial system provide a fair trial for a young, Black American woman who admits to being a member of the Communist Party." The NAACP called upon "all other Americans, black and white," to see to it that Angela Davis "shall not be denied any of the safeguards of the American judicial system."

The constitutional right to reasonable bail is one of the most precious safeguards of the American judicial system. The Marin County court has denied Angela Davis this right despite the recommendation that bail be granted by the Chief Deputy Probation Officer, James B. Soeraert, who wrote in his report to Judge Richard E. Arnason:

"From my investigation of this case, I feel that Miss Davis, if released on bail, will not flee the jurisdiction of the court. Her alleged flight following the August 7, 1970 incident would not in my estimate preclude her from being released on bail."

The danger created by this denial of bail is one that should give all minorities, including Jews, pause because, as Jewish leaders have repeated again and again, the erosion of rights for Blacks is likewise the erosion of those rights for all Americans, including Jews, who usually find themselves early victims of a repressive society. In *The Nation* of July 19, 1971, Jerome H. Skolnick, professor of criminology, University of California, and Steven A. Brick, research editor of the California Law Review, wrote:

"Denial of bail reflects the legal erosion of the constitutional right to bail in California. . . . The implications of denying bail are terribly important to the notion of a fair trial, especially in a capital case. . . . Political defendants are further hampered by denial of bail."

Many organizations, like the National Board of YWCA, the National Urban League, a number of trade unions, groups of social workers, teachers, Black lawyers and professional groups, have expressed deep concern about the possibility of a fair trial for Angela Davis and have demanded she be granted her constitutional right to bail.

The American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, at its convention August 17th in San Francisco "resolved that the 55th convention go on record that reasonable bail be set for Angela Davis. . . ."

We call upon all members of the Jewish community, and all Jewish organizations interested in upholding the constitutional right of reasonable bail and justice for all, to urge the California courts that Angela Davis be granted the right to bail and that she be assured all safeguards for a fair trial.

JEWISH COMMITTEE FOR A FAIR TRIAL FOR ANGELA DAVIS

Jewish Committee for a Fair Trial For Angela Davis

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extent of territory. Even the small and virtuous republics of antiquity had been wracked by factions based on different types and degrees of property-holding. In a large and diversified territory, according to Madison, such factions at least would be so divided against themselves that no single economic or religious interest would find it possible to dominate the institutions of government. This principle, joined with such political innovations as Separation of Powers and Representation, made it possible to extend a central republican government over the domain of the Articles of Confederation. Furthermore, Madison's own experience in the Continental Congress and his study of federal history convinced him, at least in the 1780's, that a federation had more to fear from state centrifugality than from consolidation.

Between 1787 and 1790, however, something changed. Madison grew disillusioned with his own handiwork, and went into opposition in company with Jefferson and remnants of the anti-Federalists. Here is the primary question for Madison's biographers: Why? One explanation, pursued by Ketcham, is that the shift began during the Constitutional Convention. In Ketcham's view, Madison reached the high-water mark of his nationalism just before the Convention's Great Compromise gave the states equal representation in the Senate. Frustrated in his plan to represent states in proportion to their size, he abandoned his proposal for a broad grant of federal power and instead supported an enumeration of specified powers. This interpretation reduces the theoretical distance covered by Madison on the road to his conversion, and to some extent excuses it. Madison's position on Enumeration, according to Ketcham, allowed him a clear conscience when he later argued for strict construction, even if he relied at that time on a selective use of documents. Yet Madison himself never referred to this period as marking any change in his nationalist sentiments. In fact, he indicated at the time that he supported Enumeration in order to prevent the *states* from undermining the powers of the *federal* government, as they had under the Articles of Confederation.

A more plausible explanation points to events in 1790, in the first session of Congress, when Madison broke with Treasury Secretary Hamilton over the latter's proposal for the funding of the federal debt. Discussion of this famous episode has focused on the provision for redeeming revolutionary bonds at face value from current holders, a provision that enriched well-organized speculators at the expense of veterans and "little people." Madison advocated a solution based on equity, recognizing both sets of claimants, and his indignation at speculators was very real. But this parliamentary dispute was hardly sufficient in itself to sour him on the federal administration and alienate him from President Washington, a man he counseled and admired.

Madison was more deeply disturbed by his fear that Hamilton's Treasury, in league with the nation's financial interests, could dominate Congress in the political style of Georgian England. In an essay he wrote for the Republican *National Gazette*, Madison accused his opponents of excessive fondness for the unvarnished methods of British government, of "operating by corrupt influence, substituting the motive of private interest in place of public duty, converting . . . pecuniary dispensations into bounties to favorites or bribes to opponents." In basing his Constitution on a diffusion of potentially dangerous factions, Madison had overlooked the superior means of communication and concerted action available to the financial interests. "The stock-jobbers will become the praetorian band of the Government, at once its tool and its tyrant," he wrote to Jefferson in 1791. And Madison distrusted Hamilton the more for the latter's constitutional doctrine of implied powers (based on Madison's own arguments in *Federalist* 44), his attempts to strengthen the military, and finally his desire to take command of the army during the crisis with France. These measures aroused in Madison fears of an "American Cromwell," or perhaps more precisely, of an American Bonaparte.

To Hamilton himself, Madison's apostasy could be explained only by his extreme susceptibility to the influence of Jefferson. "Certain it is," wrote the New York financier, "that a very material change took place and that the two gentlemen were united in the new ideas." In some respects, this explanation is as plausible as any, although Ketcham dismisses it as a partisan libel. Madison's celebrated association with Jefferson began in the Revolution, and even at the height of his cooperation with Hamilton, passages in the *Federalist Papers* reveal an anxious glance at Jefferson's opinions. Jefferson, on his return to the United States in 1789, spent much time with Madison, and Madison's subsequent writings reflect the alchemy worked by his friend's charm. Madison's genius seemingly was the sort that could be enlisted in the service of a more commanding personality; "he is probably deficient in that fervor and vigor of character which you will expect in a great man," concluded Fisher Ames, not one of Madison's friends. The Madison-Jefferson correspondence reveals the contrast in personality: Madison's letters are dry, precise, powerful in logic, involuted in expression; Jefferson's are vigorous, eloquent, filled with visionary and impractical ideas.

AFTER shifting to the opposition, Madison followed a straight line to the most questionable of his achievements—the drafting of the Virginia Resolutions. Although commonly regarded as a step on the road to freedom of speech, this document, together with Jefferson's Kentucky Resolutions, is of greater importance as a statement of state sovereignty and limited construction. And herein perhaps lies a clue to Madison's development. Madison had first raised the idea that state governments might provide a check on unconstitutional national measures in *Federalist* 44—ironically, the same paper that expounded the principle of loose construction which Madison later attacked in the Virginia Resolutions. It is possible Madison

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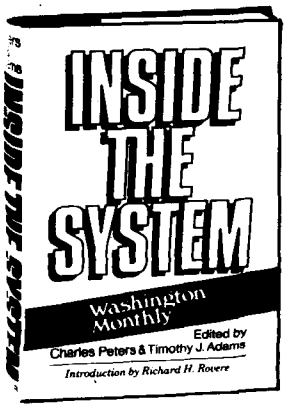

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saw this check as the offspring of a vice—the side-effect of state encroachment on federal authority. Jefferson, on the other hand, certainly regarded it as a positive virtue, the means for controlling a dominant Federalism. This doctrine, in any case, brought forth the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions, which declared the Alien and Sedition Acts unconstitutional and warned vaguely that the States should "interpose for arresting the progress of the evil." Madison stopped there, but Jefferson went the extra step over the line, threatening state action to resist enforcement of the Acts. The difference is noted by Madison's biographers, with the help of Madison's own hindsight, but his contemporaries were not so acute. Madison became both the father of the Constitution and the stepfather of Nullification.

As Madison repeatedly pointed out, he himself did not participate in the most dangerous aspect of this episode, the declaration by Kentucky that the Alien and Sedition Acts were "null and void." In fact, he gently drew Jefferson away from this doctrine. But the damage had been done. The full extent of the harm became clear in the Nullification Controversy of 1828. Madison was then in his late seventies, but his alertness cannot be questioned; he immediately recognized the full danger of Nullification—"powder under the Constitution and Union and a match in the hand of every party, to blow them up at pleasure." Perhaps he had seen it coming since 1800. An undertone of pathos pervades the last years of this old man, who repeatedly maintained the consistency of his principles but who drafted letter after letter to refute a doctrine that his conduct had in some degree inspired. Madison is nowhere more poignant than in his political testament, left for posthumous publication:

> As this advice, if it ever sees the light, will not do it till I am no more, it may be considered as issuing from the tomb, where truth alone can be respected and the happiness of man alone consulted. . . .
>
> The advice nearest to my heart and deepest in my convictions is, that the Union of the States be cherished and perpetuated. Let the open enemy to it be regarded as a Pandora with her box opened; and the disguised one, as the serpent creeping with his deadly wiles into paradise.

Language of Exile

IN PRAISE OF YIDDISH. By MAURICE SAMUEL. *Cowles. 238 pp. $7.95.*

Reviewed by LUCY S. DAWIDOWICZ

Jews, it may be said, are cultural universalists par excellence; even when residing within their own linguistic jurisdictions—Yiddish in pre-Holocaust Eastern Europe, Hebrew in present-day Israel—they have always been, and remain, avid consumers of the published products of Western civilization. Hence the enduring Jewish practice of translation. In Eastern Europe, this practically amounted to an industry as popular scientific and philosophical works, histories, political tracts, fiction, and what have you were rendered into Yiddish and traditional Hebrew for the edification of a reading public hungry for "enlightenment." The tradition continues in Israel today, where translations from foreign languages account for about one-third of all adult books published. (It would seem that the contemporary reader in Israel has more in common, insofar as his cultural tastes are concerned, with a Jew in Poland of fifty years ago than with his counterpart in the United States, where translations constitute a mere 10 per cent of trade-book publication.) As for the Jews in the English-speaking Diaspora, translations are as much a requirement, but here a reverse process obtains. Jews in the United States, Canada, South Africa, Australia have ready linguistic access to Western culture, but they are for the most part ignorant of the languages which contain their people's religious texts, historical records, and literary creations. For such Jews translations *from* the Hebrew and the Yiddish are what is needed—and it is good to report

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that their number is increasing—in order to overcome the handicap of estrangement rather than insularity.

Hebrew, given its historic preeminence, to say nothing of its special sacred character, has of course enjoyed a longer tradition of translation than has Yiddish, a comparative newcomer to the family of Jewish languages. Moreover, Yiddish, for much of its history, was denigrated by the intelligentsia as the "jargon" of the masses and its literature regarded as unworthy of serious consideration, let alone translation. Indeed, it was not until 1898 that the first translation from Yiddish into English appeared, when Leo Wiener, professor of Slavic languages at Harvard, produced a prose rendition of Morris Rosenfeld's sweatshop poems. Since that pioneering effort, the status of Yiddish literature has continued to rise, in generous measure owing to the accomplishments of Maurice Samuel, the dean of Yiddish translators, who, over the years, has been responsible for many excellent English translations of Yiddish works.

In Praise of Yiddish, Samuel's new book, is a capstone to his career as translator and Jewish cultural mediator. It should prove a boon not only to those who wish to learn the art of translating from Yiddish, but also to all who would penetrate the real character of the language. Maurice Samuel's special talent, to quote Robert Alter, has been "to explain a world alien to Western readers by locating it on cultural coordinates familiar to them."* This ability was displayed to striking effect in his now classic works, *The World of Sholom Aleichem* and *Prince of the Ghetto*, which have served to introduce generations of non-readers of Yiddish to the culture of East European Jewry. In the present work, Samuel continues in his role as cultural mediator, taking the reader into the inner laboratory of the language and unraveling a good many of the complexities peculiar to the development of Yiddish. For Yiddish, more than most languages, blends a variety of strains and cultures, and the resulting mix can often confound the would-be translator, as well as the student and the ordinary reader.

Through informal discourse, interspersed with apposite doses of history and folklore, etymology, and personal anecdote, Samuel sets himself the task of "convey[ing] to the English reader the inside feel of Yiddish." The discussion opens with a description of the character of the Yiddish language. Yiddish, Samuel notes, is the *goles* (exile) language of the Jewish people, indeed, the most important of all exile languages, having endured longer than either Aramaic or Dzhudezmo (Judeo-Spanish)—thus far, for a thousand years—and having been spoken by more Jews at any one time than any other Jewish tongue; within living memory, before the near total destruction of East European Jewry, Yiddish was still the day-to-day language of over ten million Jews.

Yiddish, moreover, has embodied the migrations of its speakers over the centuries and thus is a repository of European Jewish civilization. The oldest stratum of the language, as Samuel indicates, is the Hebrew/Aramaic, associated largely, though not exclusively, with the sacred system of the Jewish community. The second layer, and the thinnest, derives from Old French and Old Italian, and here Samuel regales the reader with examples—for instance, *tsholnt*, the Sabbath dish of meat, potatoes, and beans, set in the oven on Friday and kept there until the Saturday meal, harks back, etymologically speaking, via Old French, to the Latin *calens* ("to be hot") and is related to the French *chaud* and *chaleur*. *Bentshn*, the recitation of the blessing after meals, has its source, by way of Old Italian, in the Latin *benedicere*. *Yente* (Yiddish for a busybody, but also a respectable female name) originates, curiously enough, in the French *gentille*. The third stratum, and a very substantial one, is formed by German, specifically Middle High German, the language spoken in the Middle-Rhine basin in the 9th and 10th centuries. From that region Yiddish spread, over the following two hundred years, throughout the entire German-speaking territory, receiving a strong infusion from the various German dialects, but principally from the High German of Southern and Central Germany. By the middle of the 13th century the Yiddish orbit extended well beyond the Danube into the Slavic East, a development that had an indelible effect on the linguistic structure of Yiddish and contributed yet another important stratum to the language. Here, in the next 250 years, Yiddish was formed.

YIDDISH, like most languages, is a product of the historical encounter of its speakers with different cultures and of the fusion of the linguistic components of those cultures. Yet, even after many centuries, the specific cultural origins of the components, or strata, of Yiddish remain distinguishable. Speaking of the Hebrew/Aramaic words and phrases that have found their way into Yiddish, Samuel remarks that they "are as fresh today as when they were minted." That is partly because Yiddish itself has evolved distinctive signals whereby the various components announce their identity. For instance, written Yiddish retains the original spellings of its Hebrew/Aramaic component and, as Roman Jakobson has pointed out, spoken Yiddish has assigned a penultimate stress to words of Hebrew origin to distinguish them from simple Germanic and Slavic words, which are accented on the first syllable. Furthermore, despite the workings of the fusion process, Yiddish speakers have always retained a "component-consciousness," a term coined by Max Weinreich to describe the awareness on the part of most Yiddish-speaking Jews of the distinct etymologies that constitute the language. This sensitivity may be accounted for partly by the fact that most Ashkenazic Jews were to some degree bilingual, and even trilingual, familiar not only with Yiddish and Hebrew but also with at least one of the "coterritorial" languages, Russian or Polish.

Samuel suggests that the various components of Yiddish fulfill specific functions, but, aware of the pitfalls inherent in such classifica-

* "Maurice Samuel and Jewish Letters," COMMENTARY, March 1964.

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tions, he advances the notion tentatively. He characterizes words of the Slavic component as "homey and intimate," nearer to the "folk" than their Germanic equivalents. The Hebrew element is reserved largely for the ritual and religious culture; and it was widely believed that a Yiddish liberally sprinkled with rabbinic Hebrew elements reflected the speaker's Talmudic erudition. It turns out, however, as Marvin I. Herzog has indicated in his study of Yiddish dialects,* that the presence or absence of a rabbinic Hebrew vocabulary is determined not so much by the extent of the speaker's learning as by regional distribution patterns. "Market women in one area," Mr. Herzog notes, "make free use of words and phrases that a scholar elsewhere might cite and understand, but which he would no sooner consider Yiddish than he would accept 'foreign' words." In fact, the Hebrew component has served to furnish many words for certain rude concepts, ranging from elegant euphemisms to outright vulgarities. For instance, "hands" in Yiddish is the Germanic *hent*, but the Yiddish word for clumsy, brutish hands is *yodayim*, Hebrew for "hands." The Yiddish for "toilet paper" is *asher-yotser-papir*. *Asher yotser* ("who hast fashioned") are the first two operative words of the blessing recited after bodily elimination.

Samuel estimates the Germanic element of Yiddish at 80 per cent; Leo Wiener put it at 70 per cent; the Yiddish poet, lexicographer, and Bible translator, Yehoash, gauged both the Germanic and the Slavic elements at 80 per cent. But the componental numbers game is a treacherous exercise. Calculations are wildly conjectural and different styles and different texts yield different proportions. The only scientific investigation ever made of the frequency of the Hebrew component showed an immense range in sixty different style categories—from 1.5 to 16 per cent. Altogether, componental statistics reveal little about the nature of any language—this is perhaps particularly true of Yiddish—for the general practice is to count only word roots, while prefixes, suffixes, constructions, and inflections are often overlooked. But, as we have seen, though the lexicon of Yiddish is largely derived from Middle High German stock, the growth and development of the language has been predominantly within the Slavic orbit. In addition, as Roman Jakobson has observed,† geographically adjacent languages which find themselves in social contact, even though unrelated linguistically, will significantly influence each other's phonemic and grammatical structures and even displace the earlier effects of the original language family. This, he felt, also held true for Yiddish, as witness the Slavic-Yiddish symbiosis.

Samuel illustrates this theory in the chapter entitled "What is Not German," where he analyzes a series of compound Yiddish words whose individual parts—prefix and root verb—are of German stock but whose structure and meaning derive from the Slavic. For example, *unterzogn* ("under"+"tell") in Yiddish means "to prompt," but the German *untersagen* means "to forbid." The true parallel is to be found in the Polish and Russian: the Polish equivalent is *podpowiadac*, "to prompt," and is made up of *pod* ("under") and *opowiadac* ("to tell"); in Russian, the word is *podskazat*, the product of a similar combination. "To eavesdrop" in Yiddish is *unterhern* ("under"+"hear"), but in German it is *horchen* or *belauschen*. The Polish and Russian forms, however, correspond to the Yiddish: *podsluchiwac* and *podslushivat*. The list could be extended indefinitely.

The Slavic influence on Yiddish, Samuel observes at one point, extends beyond the linguistic: "The melancholy of the steppes echoes in Chassidic melodies, and there is a kinship between the mystical religious yearnings of certain Russian and Jewish types." The Yiddish-Slavic affinity is confirmed in an interesting study which compares English, German, Hebrew, Russian, and Ukrainian translations —all of uniformly high caliber— of a Sholem Aleichem story.** The Ukrainian rendition turned out by various objective standards to be the most successful in terms of its fidelity to the letter and spirit of the original; the Russian version followed a close second. The English translation was awarded the lowest mark (it was *not* a Maurice Samuel translation). This should come as no great surprise, for of the five languages in question English has the least in common with Yiddish—no common territory or even geographic adjacency, no common stock vocabulary, no common religion or culture. The study dramatizes the particular hazards of rendering Yiddish into English and only serves to confirm Maurice Samuel's own enormous contribution in making Yiddish and East European Jewish culture more readily accessible to English-speaking readers.

In Praise of Yiddish, as I have noted, should prove useful to every would-be translator of Yiddish; and indeed, it can very well serve as a handbook for translators and students alike.†† For besides conveying "the inside feel of Yiddish," the work also constitutes, in effect, a kind of discursive Yiddish-English dictionary of over a thousand words, idioms, and phrases. These are not merely translated, but are also defined and fully explicated, with appropriate examples. Samuel provides social and

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* *The Yiddish Language in Northern Poland: Its Geography and History*, Indiana University Press, 1965.

† In his (Yiddish) essay, "The Sound Structure in Its Slavic Environment," in *Yuda A. Yofe bukh*, YIVO, 1958.

** "Sholem Aleichem in the Stock Languages: Notes on Translations of 'Dos Tepl' into Ukrainian, German, Hebrew, English, and Russian," by Theodore Gutmans in *For Max Weinreich on his Seventieth Birthday: Studies in Jewish Languages, Literature, and Society*, Mouton (The Hague), 1964.

†† I take this opportunity to call attention to a truly indispensable Yiddish lexical work and one that Maurice Samuel refers to frequently in his own book: the *Modern English-Yiddish Yiddish-English Dictionary*, by the late Uriel Weinreich, now in its third printing (McGraw-Hill, 790 pp. $18.00). Each section contains over 20,000 entries and the enterprise altogether meets the most exacting standards of dictionary-making. Other lexical tools of high order are: the *Thesaurus of the Yiddish Language (Der oytser fun der yidisher shprakh)*, compiled by Nahum Stutchkoff and edited by Max Weinreich (YIVO); and the magisterial *Great Dictionary of the Yiddish Language*, edited by Yudel Mark and the late Judah A. Joffe, of which two volumes of a projected ten have already appeared (see my article, "Yiddish: Past, Present & Perfect," COMMENTARY, May 1962).

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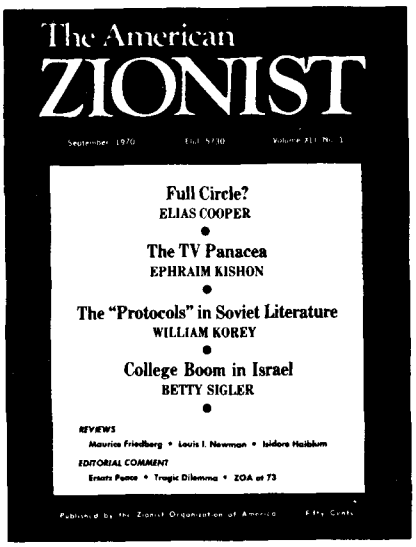

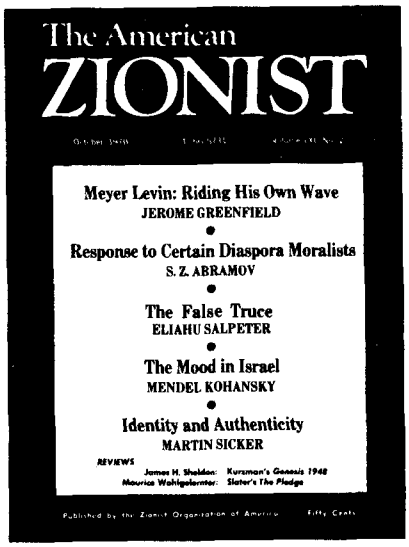

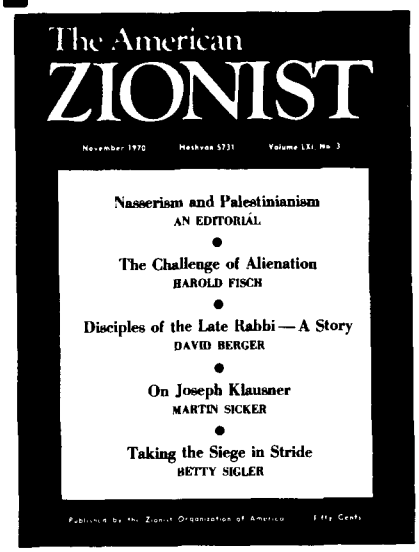

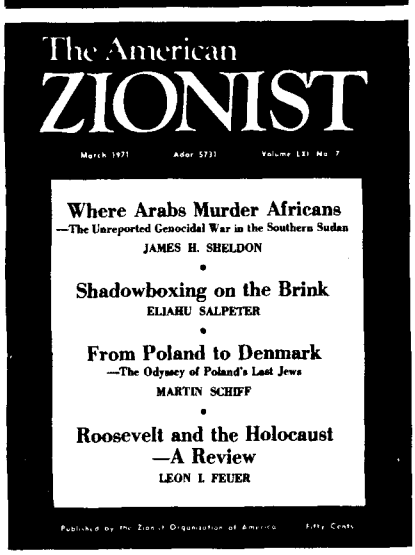

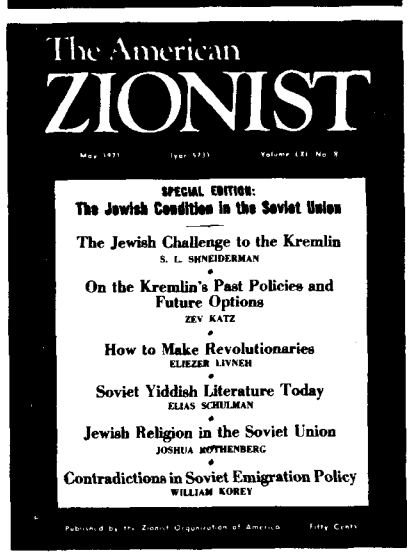

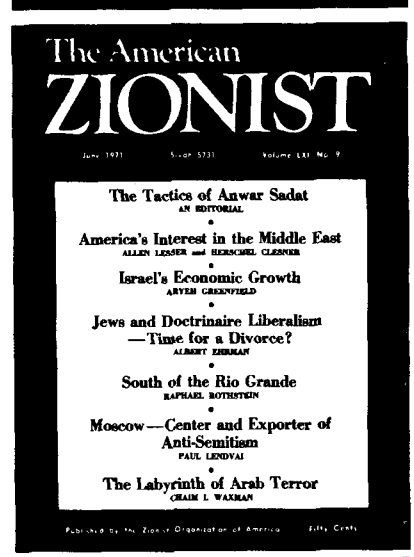

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cultural micro-histories for individual words and word-clusters—for instance, terms relating to marriage; to philanthropy; to poverty (in all its economic and linguistic variations); to Jewish scholarship. He is perhaps at his best in suggesting English equivalents that are particularly apt. The following examples—only two out of many such—are typical of the Samuel method of translation:

Akhtsn un draytsn, literally, "eighteen and thirteen," etymologically not Hebraic but Germanic, belongs among Hebraisms by way of content. The numbers eighteen and thirteen add up to thirty-one, for which the Hebrew notation in letters is *lamed alef,* which make up the word, *loy,* "no." But the negative content of the phrase *akhtsn un draytsn* seems to have different meanings in different localities: (1) as an introduction to a negation, (2) as compelling someone to return to a subject he wishes to evade, (3) as introducing a discussion of money matters: *ober vos hert zikh mikoyekh akhtsn un draytsn,* "But what about that matter we were discussing?" or "What about the money side of the question"

Klots, "a wooden beam," as applied to a person, is "heavy, doltish, lumpish," but when this Germanic word is combined with the Hebraic *kashe* in *klots-kashe,* we get something for which there is no English equivalent, and which has to be described at some length. If in the midst of a sophisticated discussion someone simple-mindedly harks back to an elementary question to which the answer has long been tacitly assumed, he is offering a *klots-kashe.* We must imagine a high-level conference of Madison Avenue executives, and someone asking earnestly, artlessly, "But gentlemen, is advertising a good thing?"

Because *In Praise of Yiddish* lends itself to such excellent practical use, it is all the more regrettable that there is no special index to words and phrases—an omission which severely limits its utility as a reference tool. But index or no, *In Praise of Yidish* will be of value to every Yiddish translator, professional or amateur, as well as to anyone who lays claim to Jewish literacy.

There is, one should note in conclusion, a renewed interest in Yiddish among the present generation. (By my own informal estimate, there are some five thousand students enrolled in Yiddish courses at a score of American colleges and universities, to say nothing of the host of adult-study groups throughout the country.) Maurice Samuel observes that the phenomenon may be ascribed to the trauma of the Holocaust; and it may indeed very well be that for many young Jews, in the United States and Israel, learning Yiddish has become a way of bearing witness, of affirming Jewish existence and of refusing to permit Ashkenazic culture to die. For such Jews, too, *In Praise of Yiddish* will be a welcome and valued work.

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The Silver Martini.
For people who want a silver lining without the cloud.

Smirnoff Silver

Ninety point four proof. Smirnoff leaves you breathless®

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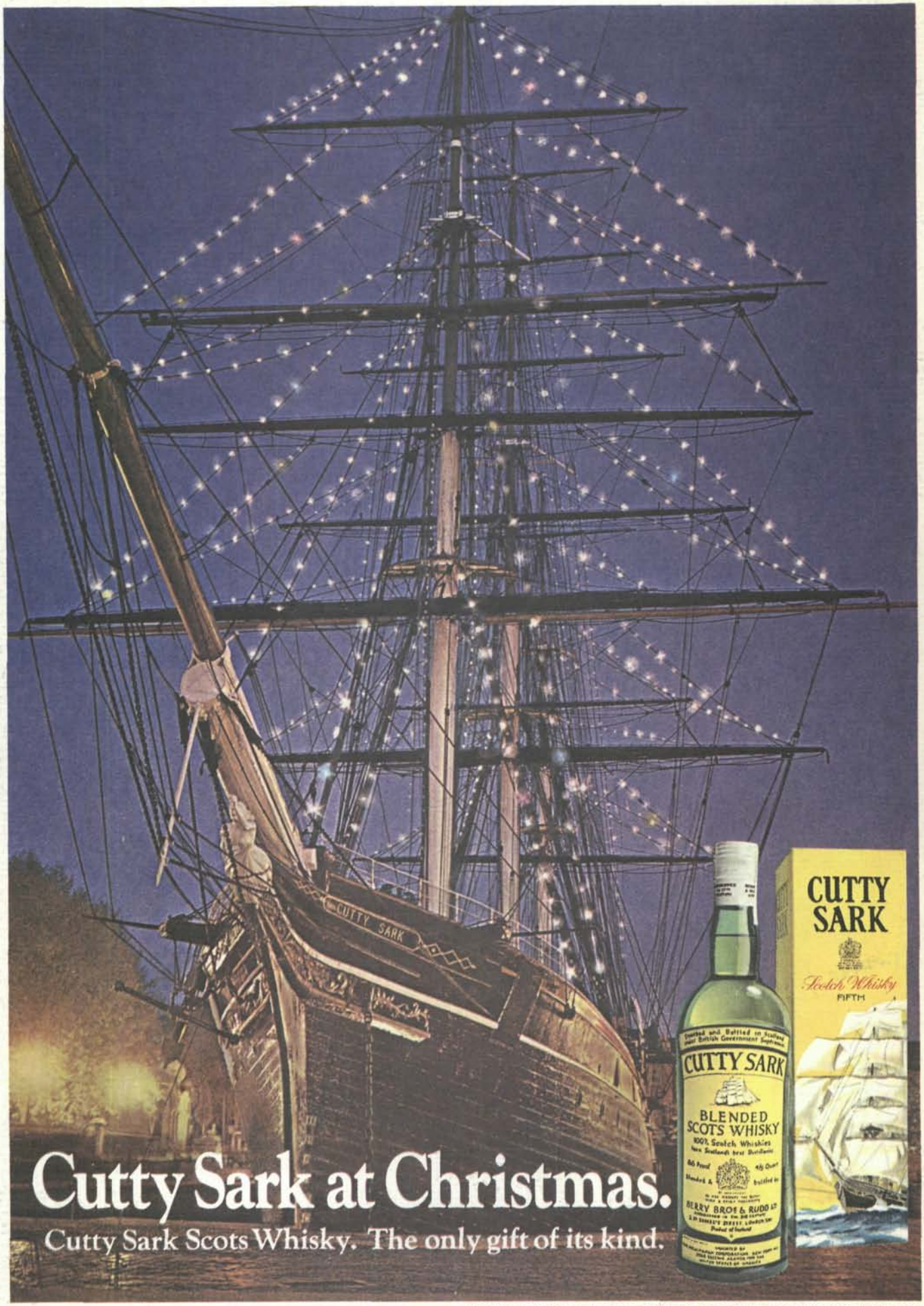

Cutty Sark at Christmas.

Cutty Sark Scots Whisky. The only gift of its kind.

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